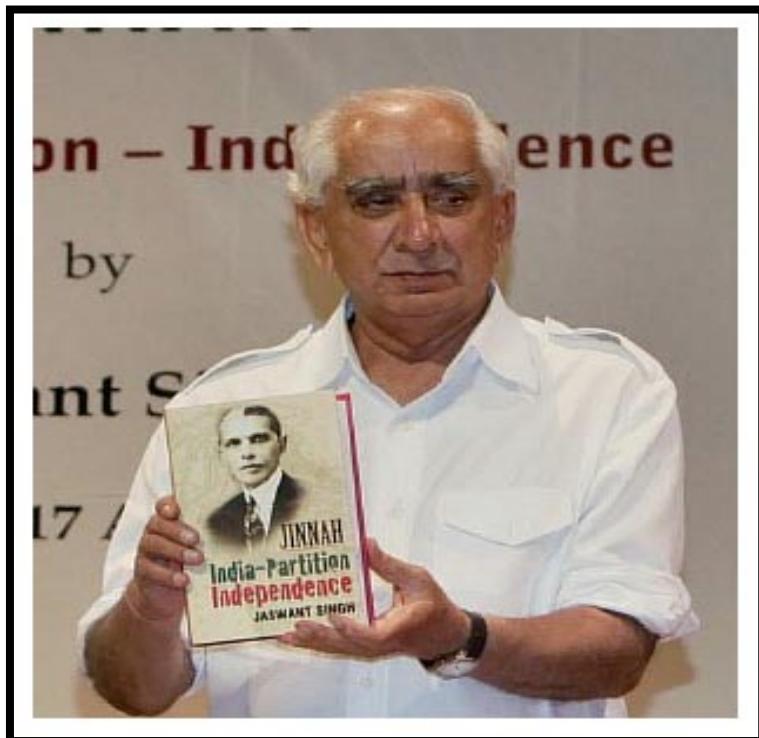


Jaswant, Jinnah and Ghost of India's Partition

**E-Digest on the theme of Partition of India
Compilation of essays**



Compiled by *Ram Puniyani*

(For Private Circulation)

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Preface

Jaswant Singh's book, *Jinnah: India-Partition-Independence* " , has raised a storm not just in a tea cup. Jaswant Sinha was expelled summarily from the party of which he was a founder member and had been serving it from last nearly three decades. It also intensified the infighting in the party with the agenda of Temples, BJP and its political father directly came forward to take charge in order to put it back on rails.

As such Jaswants Singh's book, by creating the controversy has topped the best selling charts. Despite all that the book remains a highly superficial account of the process. It focuses on the personalities in great detail, while turning a blind eye to deeper societal processes and the machinations of Imperial powers. Their agenda of keeping military presence in the region, especially in the light of the rise in the might of Soviet Union, Indian leaders tilt towards Socialism, national liberation movements in the region, and an eye on the proximity to oil wealth of region.

There are many documents quoted in the report of Amb (Retd) K. Gajendra Singh which make the things abundantly clear. One wishes Jaswant Singh would have a look at these before completing the book. There are other factors pointed out by the major Indian Historian of Modern India, Bipan Chandra, about the British policy and its kid glove treatment towards communal organizations (Muslim League, Hindu Mahasabha-RSS) which show us other dimensions of the process.

The essays articles in this compilation have been selected from the vast material by now available, to help us give a better idea of the causes of partition. There is also a selected bibliography and list of films available on the theme.

Ram Puniyani

*Mumbai,
September 2009*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<i>Page No.</i>
1. Jaswant Singh Book On Jinnah Revisits The 1947 Partition - <i>By K. Gajendra Singh</i>	04
2. Nehru, Jinnah and Partition - <i>Asghar Ali Engineer</i>	20
3. Partition culprit: To each one's own - <i>Ram Puniyani</i>	24
4. Partition and the Human Tragedy - <i>Irfan Engineer</i>	28
5. Maulana Azad and Partition - <i>Dr. Asghar Ali Engineer</i>	31
6. Social Roots of Partition process - <i>Ram Puniyani</i>	35
7. Review Article – Jinnah and Partition - <i>A.G. Noorani</i>	39
8. Jinnah and Partition - <i>Irfan Engineer</i>	56
9. Jinnah in India's History - <i>A.G. Noorani</i>	59
10. Rewriting the history of Pakistan - <i>Pervez Amirali Hoodbhoy & Abdul Hamed Nayyar</i>	71
11. British Policy of Divide and Rule: Partition of India - <i>Ram Puniyani</i>	87
12. Partition and the Fantasy of a masculine state - <i>Ashish Nandy</i>	91
13. Jaswant, Jinnah and Ghost of India's Partition - <i>Ram Puniyani</i>	94
14. Jinnah: 'Secular' Leader of a Communal Party - <i>L.S. Harderia</i>	99
15. Book Review: Partition of 1947 and its reproduction – Histories - <i>Siddharth Deb</i>	103
 Bibliography Films	

JASWANT SINGH BOOK ON JINNAH REVISITS THE 1947 PARTITION

Since the release of Jaswant Singh's book on Jinnah and the partition on 18 August, political class in India, historians. Media and others, even in Pakistan have been engrossed in the dissection of the book's contents and claims. The author a senior BJP leader has been unceremoniously expelled and the BJP itself is in turmoil which could hasten a change of the guard.

A comprehensive survey of views and comments on the Partition of Hindustan, its leaders Nehru, Jinnah and Patel and the last Viceroy Mountbatten and the strategy of imperial powers is covered in this essay.

*Cheers and take care
Gajendra Singh . 31 August, 2009.
Mayur Vihar, Delh*

Jaswant Singh Book on Jinnah Revisits the 1947 Partition

by K. Gajendra Singh
<http://www.boloji.com/analysis2/0478.htm>

Why are Indians Afraid of Faulting the Imperialist British

Turmoil and Dissensions in Bhartiya Janata Party

Ever since 18 August following the release of Jaswant Singh's book - "Jinnah: India-Partition-Independence", there has been a turmoil among politicians, specially in his Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), historians and in the Indian media. Singh, a former Finance, Defense and External Affairs Minister in Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee cabinet was summarily expelled from the party in a graceless manner. BJP leaders are publicly decrying each other and ranged on two sides, those of Hindu hardline organization, Rashtriya Seva Sangh (RSS) antecedents, with hard exclusive

Hindutva ideology, and the others, moderate and educated ones like journalist Arun Shourie and Yashwant Sinha, a former civil servant, apart from Singh, all members of Vajpayee's cabinet and close to him in liberal worldview.

Reaction of BJP and RSS

The sarvsanchalak or the chief of RSS Mohan Bhagwat, who controls the BJP, came over to Delhi from the Sangh's headquarters in Nagpur in central India and to stop the internecine squabbling and party's bleeding credibility. But the theatre and the spilling out of the differences and quarrels have cast a shadow on the credibility on BJP stalwart and former deputy Prime Minister Lal Kishan Advani who in spite of direct attacks has maintained a stoic silence. A new and younger leadership is likely to be installed by the RSS bosses in the near future.

BJP acquired power mainly through Advani's divisive and Hindu-Muslim polarizing Rathayatras (chariot rides), demolition of Babri Mosque in Ayodhya and subsequent Hindu Muslim riots, pogrom against Muslims in Gujarat under BJP Chief Minister Narendra Modi and other anti-national acts. Perhaps realizing that the people cannot be misled any more, Advani used his '*discovery*' of a secular Jinnah while visiting Pakistan to attract Muslim votes in India, who are now determinedly opposed to BJP and its policies. One can never put anything beyond a politician's quest for power. One of the main thrusts of the book appears to be that late Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, along with conservative Congress leader Sardar Patel, were equally responsible for the partition of Hindustan along with Mohammed Ali Jinnah, the main protagonist for Pakistan. Jinnah, an anathema to BJP and its Hindutva philosophy, in fact comes in for praise in the book, for his secular credentials, perhaps with the aim of also undermining Nehru's mystique and the Congress party.

During his 2005 Karachi visit, Advani told a Pak TV channel that "*Pakistan would have been a secular nation if Jinnah's speech of 1947 was implemented. It was pushed beneath the carpet. Pakistan would have been a different country had Jinnah's views been understood.*" His praise for Jinnah's raised a storm in his party. He received fierce criticism from RSS and had to step down from BJP president's post. He was, however, rescued from the isolation by Atal Behari Vajpayee.

Of course none of Sangh Parivar leaders attended the book release and the panel discussion after which the controversy erupted.

BJP's lackluster President Rajnath Singh stated that Jaswant Singh views in the book "*do not represent the views of the party*". "*In fact, the party completely disassociates itself from the contents of the book*," he added. After the book release, when asked if the RSS agreed with Singh's view that Jinnah has been "demonized" in India, Ram Madhav, an RSS leader said, "*I have only read excerpts of the book. But I am constrained to say that it is far from the truth to state that Jinnah was not responsible for the Partition.*"

BJP spokesperson Prakash Javadekar refused to make any direct comment on Singh's book, but made it clear that the party did not agree with the contention that Jinnah was not responsible for partition and said the party stood by its June 2005 resolution on Jinnah, which holds him as one of the most important politicians responsible for the partition of India. Narendra Modi's BJP government in Gujarat banned the book. Jaswant Singh has petitioned the Supreme Court to lift the ban. India like many other nations even democracies is showing Orwellian tendencies.

Panel Discussion

In a panel discussion after the book release, maverick Lawyer Ram Jethmalani, inimical to Nehru-Gandhi family, described Jinnah as a true secularist and blamed the partition on Nehru. He said Jinnah had been a great collaborator of Gandhi in achieving freedom for India and regretted he had been demonized by a people who idolized Nehru.

A British citizen Lord Meghnand Desai exposed his ignorance of history by declaring that "*the division of the country became inevitable around April, 1947 and not before that*". He termed Lord Mountbatten the "*father of Pakistan*" and added that Jinnah had been turned into a villain through complete fabrication of facts, and claimed the Partition happened because of Nehru's individualism and crude Marxism. He said the Congress had no right to represent Muslims and accused Nehru of mindlessly rejecting Jinnah's genuine demand for a guarantee about Muslim rights.

It is irritating that a British loyalist and proxy like Desai is given undue importance in India, his vacuous articles and chatter fill Indian media and corporate channels. It may be recalled that Prime Minister Tony Blair was accused of selling knighthoods to some shady characters in exchange for money for his Labour party. Desai is doing a pretty good job at defending the British in India.

Noted journalist M.J.Akbar did not agree with Jaswant apportioning blame on Nehru for the Partition. "It was the Congress Working Committee which accepted the Cabinet (Mission) Plan...Nehru was not the dictator of the Congress," he said, adding, "while Gandhi wanted a secular nation with a Hindu majority, Jinnah wanted a secular nation with a Muslim majority." Akbar derided the claims that Nehru was responsible for the partition and that Jinnah was secular. But he praised Jaswant for lifting history from the trap of passion.

Senior journalist B.G.Verghese questioned the premise that Jinnah was secular. He likened Jinnah's threat of direct action with the tactics of the Taliban and accused the then Muslim League of communal blackmail. He defended Nehru and the Congress for rejecting Jinnah's two-nation theory.

CEO of Pakistan's '*The Dawn*' newspaper Hameed Haroon said Jinnah's image remains wrongly portrayed and unexplored in that country. He said Jinnah's pictures wearing Western dresses and smoking cigarettes were suppressed in Pakistan "...and he became a two dimensional cardboard of (General) Zia's ideals." According to Haroon, Jinnah's speech on religious freedom was "censored by the information hierarchy of Pakistan before even the state came into being."

Haroon, wondered why India did not explore the true Jinnah. Pakistan, he said, avoided doing it because Jinnah was too liberal and progressive for the bigoted rulers who succeeded him. It was left to a long time Delhi resident senior British journalist Mark Tully to say there were "no saints and all are, in a sense, sinners...everyone made mistakes." This included both Nehru and Jinnah as well as the British.

Jaswant at Book Fair

"Unless we understand Mohammed Ali Jinnah as a man and as a statesman, we cannot understand Bangladesh, Pakistan and our relations with the two countries. Nobody has written about Jinnah - whom Mahatma Gandhi described as a great man - the way I have," Singh told a packed audience comprising writers, journalists, publishers and bureaucrats at the Pragati Maidan on the inaugural day of the Delhi Book Fair on 29 August.

"Partition has been the most damaging event in modern India. Though I was born in a village far away from Lahore and Sindh, I always wondered how could these ever become foreign lands... and

(how) the man (Jinnah) who had so assiduously worked for the 1916 Lucknow Pact could divide the country," he said. [The 1916 Lucknow Pact between the Muslim League and the Indian National Congress had pressured the British government to give Indians more authority to run the country.]

"The takeoff point for my research was 1857 - the mutiny which brought the Hindus and Muslims in the subcontinent together and finally uprooted the British after 90 years, in 1947. The 1857 revolt continued to haunt the British," Singh said.

"Jinnah set another milestone in communal amity in 1916 with the Lucknow Pact. A man who had lived all his life in India barring the last 13 months and who had been insulted by the British did not have to be demonized by us," he said. "India cannot be shackled by its neighbors and unless we become one country, it will be difficult to realize our dreams. We have to cultivate a mindset that allows us to think freely", he added.

Khilafat Movement

Incidentally, another instance of the Congress–Muslim League amity, the Khilafat movement (1919-1924), although mainly a Muslim religious movement, to protect the Caliphate when the British troops occupied Istanbul, became a part of the wider Indian Independence movement. The Caliphate was abolished by Kemal Ataturk, founder of the staunchly secular republic of Turkey in 1923, fashioned out of the ashes of the Ottoman Empire. So when Indian leaders visiting Turkey talked of the Khilafat movement, it made little impact during the secular regimes in Ankara. The money to fight occupation forces sent from India to Ankara was used later by Ataturk to build a Parliament house and a Bank.

Other Comments

Writing about the politics of Partition with entrenched ideological commitments and the desire for explanations and the need to apportion blame, makes it almost impossible to do so. Commented an Indian scholar, Pratap Bhanu Mehta;

"It is a prodigious work of scholarship, wide-ranging in its references and well documented. It has its own historical judgments to make and sometimes they are too swift. But there is no doubt that the book opens up serious and interesting questions. It has a narrative of its own. Partition was not the result of an

irrevocable religious cleavage between Hindus and Muslims. It was squarely a product of politics”

Professor Irfan Habib, a noted historian, commented, "One must remember that the priority before them was Independence. The partition was a secondary concern. They probably felt that once the British were out of the way, differences could be resolved, that Pakistan would not be a sustainable entity. There was a bit of misreading of the British imperialist agenda. Also, people forget that, over the years, the wars and wrangling over Kashmir has re-imposed the divide rather than dissolve it."

Riposte by Narendra Singh Sarila, Ex-Indian Diplomat & ADC to Mountbatten

Writing in “*The Tribune*” of 19 August, 2009, that “*Jinnah pursued Pakistan for power; Jaswant disappoints; ignores British designs,*” retired Indian diplomat, Narendra Singh Sarila, who he was ADC to Lord Mountbatten and wrote a few years ago “*The Shadow of the Great Game: The Untold Story of India’s Partition,*” said;

“I am disappointed with Jaswant Singh’s 660-page book on Jinnah and Partition, released earlier this week.” At the end he says: “*I still fail to understand why India was partitioned in 1947? Or the manner in which it was done.*” If even after his massive research and hard work, he did not get to the bottom of his subject, there is a reason for it. It is because he has ignored the most important element that was responsible for Partition, namely British strategic interests that required the creation of Pakistan. The British top secret documents on Partition have now been unsealed and there was no excuse for ignoring them. I myself showed these to him some years back. The whole story is there in those documents.

“The Labour government that came to power in Britain in mid-1945 was willing to grant independence to India but was worried about losing its 60-year-old military base here from which the British controlled the whole Indian Ocean area, including the eastern Middle-East that contained oil wells — The Wells of Power — of increasing importance in war and peace and which Stalin, with his rising ambition after his victory over Germany, the British feared, might seize. In the last two great wars it was from their Indian base that the British deployed Indian and British forces in Iran and Iraq and the British Chiefs of Staff were adamant on keeping a foothold in India. But Atlee, the British Prime Minister, knew that the government of a free India under the Congress

party's rule would neither give them a military base nor join their team against the Soviet Union in the fresh Great Game. What were they to do?

“Towards the end of 1945, Field Marshal Wavell, the Viceroy of India, came up with a possible way out of their quandary. After the Congress party had refused to cooperate in the war effort in 1939, unless Britain announced that it would give freedom to India after the war, Wavell’s predecessor, Lord Linlithgow, had encouraged Jinnah to formulate the Pakistan scheme, informing London that Jinnah was in his pocket. “He represents a minority and a minority can only hold its own with our assistance,” the Viceroy told London.

“ Wavell now suggested that they use Jinnah’s demand to create a separate state in the north-west — not give him all he wanted in the west but territories along Iran, Afghanistan and Sinkiang with the port of Karachi — and Pakistan would cooperate with them on defence matters. On being asked by London to give them a clear picture of the areas that could go to Pakistan, Wavell in a historic dispatch on February 6, 1946, sent a map delineating the boundaries of Pakistan he had in mind, which were exactly the boundaries that Radcliff drew 18 months later.

“So, what Pakistan was going to be was already decided in early 1946 and the time between then and August 15 was used by Atlee, Cripps and Wavell and later Mountbatten to make Jinnah accept the smaller Pakistan and the Congress party to accept Partition, while Atlee kept proclaiming from housetops that they were working to preserve India’s unity. All the British maneuvering can be discerned by studying the British top secret files. It is a myth that Jinnah founded Pakistan. President Roosevelt had posted his representative in Delhi after 1942 and his dispatches in the US archives also tell us much.

“ Some of the assessments in the book are also mistaken. To believe that the Cabinet Mission Plan would have resulted in a united India is moonshine. After 10 years Punjab, Sindh and the NWFP had the option to break away on one side and Bengal and Assam on the other side. That would give the League a much larger Pakistan after 10 years and certainly, in the meanwhile, it would fan the flames of communalism to prepare the ground for the above. And what about the princely states? They had the option to break away too. So, possibly Hyderabad would join Pakistan and would help reach Tripura and Manipur, which would be swallowed up. The Plan would have balkanized India and Nehru,

despite the many mistakes he made, was correct in striking it down.

[As for an Indian federation, look at what has happened in Christian –Muslim Cyprus or divided Palestine-author of the article]

“The Congress made many mistakes in the struggle, but Gandhiji united a heterogeneous and largely uneducated people, without which Independence was not possible.

“I agree with Jaswant Singh that Jinnah at heart was a nationalist and a secularist. And he remained so for the first 60 years of his life — a long time. Jinnah opposed satyagrah, calling it an extreme programme that would lead to disaster. He was shunned by Gandhiji. And Motilal Nehru feared that this brilliant man would eclipse his son, Jawaharlal. In 1928 Jinnah proposed to convince the Muslims to give up separate electorates — that were preventing Hindu-Muslim political interdependence and unity — suggesting in return that Muslim representation in the Central Assembly be raised from 27 per cent to 33 per cent — a very minor concession compared to the possibility of ending the pernicious separate electorates. But he was pooh-poohed, and virtually driven out from the Congress party.

“After the Congress refused to cooperate in the war effort in 1939, the Viceroy sought out Jinnah. The doctors had earlier the same year told him that he had terminal TB. Jinnah had always wanted to be the first in every thing. There are many instances in history of people abandoning their principles to achieve power and glory. So, for him it was now or never. His Pakistan scheme, launching Direct Action — the precursor of today’s terrorism — and mobilizing Muslims against the Hindus, were all in the pursuit of power and glory. He did not believe in what he was doing. After Pakistan had been achieved, he spoke in Karachi advocating secularism. But he quickly retreated when opposed by his followers.

“Chagla, who worked with him in his law firm in Bombay, once told me that he was a man of great integrity. But it was tragic that at the end he lost it. And no man can be great without integrity. I also feel sympathy for Jinnah, for his humiliation and suffering. But at the end of his life he did many bad things, and inflicted incalculable harm. To believe that he was great just because he fought the mighty Congress party is nonsense. Do we call Hitler

great because he fought the mighty Allies?" Stanley Wolpert blames Mountbatten

US historian Stanley Wolpert in his book -- *Shameful Flight* -- revisits Partition, and blames Louis Mountbatten squarely for one of the most horrific episodes of the 20th century. Undoubtedly the arrogant and unrealistic Mountbatten is the central villain in the book. Although the British cabinet gave him a longer time, but Mountbatten never had any intention of using it.

'Mountbatten had resolved to wait until India's Independence Day festivities were all over,' Wolpert writes, 'the flashbulb photos all shot and transmitted worldwide, Dickie's medal-strewn white uniform viewed with admiration by millions, from Buckingham and Windsor palaces to the White House. What a glorious charade of British imperial largesse and power 'peacefully' transferred. One of the reasons for the Labour government in Britain, which had come to power soon after World War II, to grant hasty independence to India was because there was hardly any trust between the Labour and Indian leaders, Wolpert argues. Radcliffe, a barrister, had never set foot on Indian soil before 1947 was to accomplish, in a month, work that should have taken at least a year.' Wolpert points out, "He was so afraid of what he had done -- worried that Sikhs, Hindus or Muslims would kill him -- (that) he left India hastily."

"The rapid departure of the British from the region was the catalyst for over half a century of violence, a legacy that lives on today," says Wolpert, discussing why Partition still holds interest. "The Indian leaders as well as their counterparts in England failed to appreciate how bad and how weak a viceroy Mountbatten was," Wolpert continues. "In many ways, he was the worst viceroy of India, he was the centerpiece of this tragedy." -- "I still wonder how it was possible for the leaders of Great Britain, barely two years after defeating, with American support, the armies of Hitler and Mussolini, to withdraw 14,000 British officers in such unseemly haste from India," he adds. Nehru is also faulted for not listening to Gandhi in getting Jinnah to mediate in the escalating violence in undivided Kashmir. Gandhi even wondered if holding a plebiscite in Kashmir could end the looming violence there.

Why did Nehru listen so much to Mountbatten ! --Nehru unfortunately came too much under the influence of Mountbatten, accentuated by Nehru's education in England. Nehru was charmed by the English upper world, he thought he could trust and work with Mountbatten. "Mountbatten's royal blood appealed as much to

the rulers of princely states in India," Wolpert continues, "as his radical views and social charms did to Nehru. His charm was so much that Nehru was blinded by it." Asked if Nehru's relationship with Mountbatten's wife Edwina played a role, the historian says, "It helped him cloud the danger of what Mountbatten was doing."

Years after Partition, Mountbatten would whisper now and then how he had botched up the Independence process. Nehru 'finally awakened,' and admitted in a letter to the Nawab of Bhopal, a friend, 'Partition came and we accepted it because we thought that perhaps that way, however painful it was, we might have some peace.

'And yet, the consequences of that Partition have been so terrible that one is inclined to think that anything else would have been preferable,' Nehru added

Comment by Dr. Niloufer Bhagwat, an eminent international jurist

"The restructuring and reorganization of territories and boundaries of existing states/countries is one of the main instruments of Imperial control of resources and strategic territories; for this purpose some political and fascist organizations are set up and used . The killings which took place using so called religious parties /cultural organizations on both sides, was both a preparation and a justification for the divide.

"In Iraq as soon as the withdrawal of US troops is a part of the parliamentary agenda with the possibility of referendum being held, the killings once again are stepped up. When an Imperialist power is on the decline it is even more blood thirsty and ferocious, -- To-day it is not one power alone, it is the Banks, financial institutions and financiers at the core of the dominant system. "Jinnah, the Muslim League, the Jamait - e - Islami, the Tablighi Jammat were all collaborators political and cultural, whereas the Hindu extremist organizations played the same role as did some of the princely States. Gandhi 's assassination was an Imperialist plot and the extremist organizations and their leaders who were a part of the wider plot received support from some of the Princely States.

"There are familial and individual loyalties to the Raj and to the Empire even to-day, which extends into several political parties of the right and left and into institutions and organizations overt and covert. Let us see how the narrative unfolds .The biggest threat to

the unity and integrity of India continues to be from the same stream of finance capital operating from more than one capital.

"It appears that Mumbai is once again to be targeted for attacks, the FBI was here inspecting railway stations and other regions duly escorted by policing agencies. The "War of Terror" along with Swine flu is the new instruments of control even as the tatters of the economic policy of neo-liberalism or the ' Washington Consensus ' emerges globally.

"In the context of India I was told by an intelligence operative that the decision making of the 'dirty tricks' department for the country has its headquarters in Mumbai . Now we can add New Delhi, Ahmedabad, Pune and Bangalore though earlier they were not as important.

"It is a matter of immense satisfaction that those who make policy should directly witness its consequences and its impact on diverse sectors, institutions and on society as a whole.

"The book and the controversies raised are diversionary, the Indian National Congress led by Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru assisted by Sardar Vallabhai Patel, Maulana Azad, Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, with the best will in the world could not have defeated partition, the decision was already taken, Pakistan would be the instrument of Anglo-American policy in the region and for better control it would have either proxies or military governments as an adjunct of the Empire."

The Mother Of All Battles: For Oil, by K Gajendra Singh
07/10/06 "Information Clearing House"---

ME Oil and partition of India;

An important reinforcement to Chomsky's conclusion (that US and Israeli interests coincide in the Middle East) has been clearly brought out in a well researched book by a retired Indian diplomat Narendra Singh Sarila, 'The Shadow of the Great Game: The Untold Story of India's Partition.' Sarila, who was briefly ADC to the last British Viceroy to India, Lord Louis Mountbatten, in his book documents how the British leadership across the political spectrum, Conservatives and Labour , intrigued, told lies, divided the Indian subcontinent and created the state of Pakistan. Because Mahatma Gandhi with this opposition to violence and war, and emphasis on peaceful means to resolve all disputes and Jawaharlal Nehru with his non-real politic idealism and vision of creating

friendship and understanding among colonized and exploited people of Asia, Africa, Middle east and elsewhere , would not join Western military pacts to protect from the Soviet Union, the oil resources in the Middle East dominated by Western powers .

Sarila highlights "little known facts about the unobtrusive pressure that the USA exerted on Britain in favor of India's independence as well as unity in the hope of evolving a new post-colonial world order. The British leaders warned Indian leaders against dollar domination. Sarila naively forgets, what the US had done in Cuba and Philippines, after it replaced Spain as the colonial master.

After the second world war, British realized that they had to get out of India, but the subcontinent was a vital strategic asset, so till the end London tried to keep India as a dominion like Australia or Canada, to keep it as- "a base for Britain to continue their domination of the Indian Ocean and the oil-rich Persian Gulf with its wells of power," says the author. But as the "Congress party of India would not play the great game with Britain against the Soviet Union," the British decided to partition India.

The ultimate object was to retain at least some part in the North-West of India, "for defensive and offensive action against the USSR in any future dispensation in the sub-continent". And Britain knew that this could be best achieved by having a willing and subservient Pakistan as its client. So the only way -- was to use Jinnah to detach areas of India, which border Iran, Afghanistan and Sinkiang and create a new state there. The author also traces the roots of the present Kashmir imbroglio and how the matter was dealt with in the UN to help out ally Pakistan.

Churchill; "In war every truth has to have an escort of lies." A Western tradition

On the question of dominion status and independence for India in 1942, during the second world war, US President Franklin Roosevelt's envoy Harriman was informed by the British that approximately 75% of the Indian troops were Muslims but only 35% of the troops were Muslims as Lord Wavell , British Military Commander had cabled London the same week). Later British Prime Minister Winston Churchill told Roosevelt in another context that "in war every truth has to have an escort of lies" a hoary western tradition over centuries. They have excelled themselves in the US led illegal invasion and occupation of Iraq. The escort of lies is so numerous that there is little truth left.

The divide and create mayhem policy used in Indian subcontinent is being replicated in Iraq by Bush and Tony Blair, a wannabe Churchill, with the former one's claiming that Churchill was like a Texan. --Sarila documents in detail how after the end of World War II in 1945, the new Labour government of Clement Attlee and Wavell decided to divide India. "The British used Jinnah and political Islam to protect their strategic interests." "This policy was the mother of all causes for the creation of Pakistan," asserts Sarila. They succeeded in selling the idea of a truncated Pakistan to Jinnah.

On June 3, 1947, British Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin, while addressing the Labour Party's annual conference, spilled the beans that the division of India "would help consolidate Britain in the Middle East".

A British top secret appreciation prepared in the Commonwealth Relations Office, soon after Indian independence, now available in the India office archives of the British Library, says: "Financially, industrially and from the point of view of manpower and general material resources India was stronger than Pakistan." But that "India had no real background on which to build and unite a nation, there being no real affinity between its North and South, the existence of disruptive elements like the Sikhs and the likelihood of the Communists, with their own agenda, growing in numbers and influence."

On the other hand, the appreciation asserts that Pakistan, weak in financial and material resources -- through comfortable in food and manpower -- ``has a definite background, Islam, on which to build up a nation and to unite the people...and has less to fear from internal disruptive forces than the government of India, and less to fear from secessionist tendencies [Bangladesh!]". So much for the so called British political acumen!

Churchill and other British leaders had to be reminded by Indian leaders that their comments on such lines were unwarranted. Decades after 1947, the British media wrote obituary of elections and democracy in India, only to be proved wrong repeatedly.

The book sends out a cautionary signal to present-day Indians; to avoid misplaced idealism, superciliousness and escapism, to which some of their ancestors fell prey. New Delhi is now being seduced by Washington (ask US allies Turkey and Pakistan, how they have been let down in post cold war period) into an nuclear agreement to enmesh India into US spider's web, which would adversely

affect the security of billion plus Indians. Throughout history barring a few , the last one being Indira Gandhi, navel watching Hindus have shown little strategic acumen.

With weak grassroots political organizations, Pakistan with many British and the British-era civil servants strengthened the bureaucracy's control over the polity. While the politicians wanted to strengthen relations with the British, Washington encouraged Military Chief General Ayub Khan to establish close cooperation with the Pentagon. And in 1958 the military took over power. USA , in pursuit of its national interests , has seldom bothered about the form of government in an ally. Otherwise, why would it embrace Pakistan, or say Egypt, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia or any of the other kingdoms and sheikhdoms and repressive regimes around the world. US talk of spreading liberty, freedom and democracy is just nauseating.

Beginning with Ayub Khan's unofficial visit to the US, the foundations for bilateral cooperation in the military field were laid. These have survived through thick and thin, like a bad marriage which neither side can let go, despite bad patches, like the initial takeovers by Generals Zia ul-Haq and Musharraf. But the 1979 entry of the Soviet troops into Afghanistan and 911 attacks on US Trade Towers and Pentagon brought back the old romance. US finds military and other dictators easier to handle. “

Then there is another fine book by another retired Indian diplomat.

C. Dasgupta's War and Diplomacy in Kashmir 1947-48

Dasgupta's reflections in his introduction bear quotation in extenso: "The conflict which broke out between India and Pakistan in 1947 was unique in the annals of modern warfare: it was a war in which both the opposing armies were led by nationals of a third country (Still to depart colonial power). British generals commanded the armies of the newly independent states of India and Pakistan... While it was unique in this one respect, the first Indo-Pakistan war was also a typical Third World conflict from a broader perspective. External factors tend to play a major part in wars between medium or small states. Their dependence on major powers for military supplies, economic assistance and diplomatic support makes these states vulnerable to external pressures. Thus the positions taken by the great powers can influence the duration, intensity and even the outcome of such conflicts. The Kashmir war of 1947-48 is one such example. For both India and Pakistan, Britain was the leading overseas partner in trade, industry and

finance. Both countries turned to Britain for military equipment, spares and oil supplies. The war was unique only in the extent to which the two states were vulnerable to British influence on account of the presence of British officers at the senior most levels of their armed forces. These officers were in a position to directly influence the course of the war through the advice they tendered to their respective governments and the manner in which they implemented - or ignored - government directives."

Conclusion

Many ignorant Indians, specially from the north believe that the partition could have been avoided. In 1947. Such colossal ignorance about history !.

The White Christian Europe divided and destroyed the composite five century old Ottoman empire using religion, ethnicity, language divide, even fooling the Arabs whose Caliph, the Ottoman Sultan was resident in Istanbul. See how they have been divided, bullied, humiliated, destroyed and exploited since 1st WW.

In 1990s, non-Orthodox Christian US and NATO powers destroyed the multi-lingual, multi-ethnic and multi religious South Slav Republic of Yugoslavia consisting of Serbs, Croats, Kosovars, Macedons and others, who followed many religions. The Imperialists would do anything to gain control.

US led illegal invasion of Iraq in 2003 and brutal occupation has destroyed a united secular Iraq of Shia and Sunni Arabs and Kurds, Turkmen and others .

Seeing the level and kind of discussions in India , I feel dismayed that Indian media and think tanks remain brainwashed, even generationally i.e. those whose fathers studied in British schools and universities or British style institutions in India, with their heroes in Clive, Hastings, Curzon, Churchill, Blair and now Bush and Obama .

Will Hindustan be ever free from the pernicious indoctrination by the white race, which still continues.

A Utopian solution!

US, which claimed to be a hyper power and the new Rome till 2003, after its illegal invasion of Iraq is now struck in a quagmire.

It has strengthened enemy Iran, a regional power throughout history, which Washington must now engage to find solutions to its failure in Iraq and even Afghanistan. US proxy Georgia was beaten back by Russians last year with the loss of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Another proxy President Victor Yushchenko of Ukraine, brought to power by US franchised street revolution in 2005 has seen his popularity plummet to less than double figures. Shanghai Cooperation Organization is gearing up to stop NATO inroads into Eurasia. At home US banksters have destroyed US economy, now in fast decline.

When and if US led western military and economic power declines, which will also affect China (Gordon G Chang wrote in May 2009 of the “*Beginning of the end of the Chinese miracle*”, that after two decades of uninterrupted prosperity, the initial stages of the downturn are exposing the inherent weaknesses of China’s economy, and those fissures will be felt near and far. But the jury is still out) there is a chance for the leadership of the subcontinent, Afghanistan, Iran, Central Asia, and even Turkey to lay the foundations of an economic community on the lines of Europe Union and ASEAN.

Under Devputra Kanishka's rule from Peshawar in present-day Pakistan, traders and preachers moved freely and flourished in his empire, which covered most of Central Asia and Xinjiang down to central and east India. During the 16th century AD, traders moved freely in the empires of the Moghuls of Hindustan, and the Uzbek Shaybani Khans of Khwarizm on the Aral Sea, the Shia Safavids of Iran and the Ottomans of Turkey right into central Europe. A *hundi* (based on the hawala - trust - system still in existence today) issued in a Delhi bazaar was valid in Istanbul or Bukhara.

K Gajendra Singh, Indian ambassador (retired), served as ambassador to Turkey and Azerbaijan from August 1992 to April 1996. Prior to that, he served terms as ambassador to Jordan, Romania and Senegal. He is currently chairman of the Foundation for Indo-Turkic Studies. Copy right with the author. Email: kgsingh@yahoo.com

August 30, 2009



NEHRU, JINNAH AND PARTITION

Dr. Asghar Ali Engineer

(Secular Perspective August 16-31, 2009)

Mr. Jaswant Singh, a senior BJP leader from Rajasthan has written a book on Jinnah which is expected to be published shortly. He has, according to a news item on NDTV, called Jinnah a secular person and thrown responsibility for partition on Nehru. Earlier Mr. L. K. Advani had also described Jinnah as secular while visiting Jinnah's mausoleum in Karachi and paid heavy price for it as RSS asked him to resign as president of BJP. And now Jaswant Singh, a fairly independent minded leader has called Jinnah a secular person.

No doubt Jinnah is a highly controversial figure. He is greatly admired and is father of the nation in Pakistan. He is often referred to as Baba-e-Qaum by Pakistanis. But he is hated by many in India and is considered mainly responsible for creation of Pakistan and hence a villain of the peace. Such extremes can never adequately define a person, let alone being understood adequately.

The motives for describing Jinnah as secular by two top BJP leaders may be different but there is an element of truth in what they say. Shri Advani was speaking as a politician during his visit and may be he tried to please his hosts in Pakistan. Mr. Jaswant Singh is under no such obligation and is speaking as a scholar as he is known to be of fairly independent mind and may not be much concerned about what RSS and BJP leaders might think.

It is not only in India that Jinnah is subject to different interpretations, some hating him as breaker of India and some absolving him of total responsibility for partition. Jinnah is subject to different interpretation in Pakistan itself some moderate and liberal Muslims describing him as secular and often quoting his speech in the Constituent Assembly as a proof of his secularism. The conservatives and orthodox Muslims, on the other hand, projecting him as believer in two nation theory and true Muslim who created Pakistan for Islam and Muslims.

We have the same problem with Mahatma Gandhi in our own country. Some Dalit and RSS leaders hate him again for different

reasons. Dalits hate him as an upper caste Hindu leader who upheld the concept of caste, if not of untouchability. And RSS leaders hate him, though publicly they may not take such position for obvious reasons. They hate him as they consider Gandhi as betrayer of Hindu cause and supporter of Muslims. They even indulge in propaganda that Gandhiji is responsible for partition of the country.

Many people hold Nehru as responsible for partition and among those who hold Nehru as responsible there are all types of people – secular as well as communal. The question arises who is really responsible? We Indians and Pakistanis while holding our own leaders as responsible we have completely exonerated the British rulers of their responsibility for partition.

Though secular elements at times do refer to the role of the British, communal forces in both the countries have completely absolved British. In RSS propaganda main culprits are Muslims led by Jinnah whereas in Pakistani propaganda it is Hindus led by Gandhi who are mainly responsible for partition. If one studies the complex developments carefully in mid-fifties it is difficult to fix total responsibility on any one person or one party. Different actors played different role adding up to partition of the country.

First let us see the role of Jinnah since he is at the centre-stage of partition. Before this we also have to look at him whether he was secular or communal. It must be noted that we cannot go by western definition of secular and communal. We have accepted these terms in our own sense and in our own context. Gandhiji was secular despite being highly religious in his attitude. Nehru, of course, was secular more in western than in Indian sense.

Similarly Jinnah was also secular more in western sense. Both Nehru and Jinnah never were religious as Gandhi and Maulana Azad were. Nehru was closer to Jinnah than to Gandhiji and Maulana Azad was closer to Gandhiji than to Jinnah. Maulana Azad also was deeply a religious person like Gandhiji though he was more liberal in religious matters than Gandhiji.

Jinnah was thoroughly westernized person right from his younger days. He never had any religious training. He did not observe any Islamic taboos like liquor and pork. He never observed religious rituals. He even disagreed with Gandhiji about involving Ulama in politics and he opposed Gandhiji taking up Khilafat question. He believed in separation of politics from religion. He was described

as Muslim Gokhale by friends. Gokhale was liberal and so was Jinnah.

Jinnah was certainly secular in this sense. He until 1935 described himself as Indian first and then Muslim. And, until 1937 he had never thought of partition even in his dreams. He even entered into an informal understanding with the congress in 1937 elections in U.P. His differences with Indian National Congress had begun from 1928 onwards when his demands were rejected by the Nehru committee set up by the Congress to solve communal problem. He had even ridiculed the concept of Pakistan initially propounded by Rahmat Ali, a Cambridge University student.

The two nation theory was deeply flawed and Jinnah had formulated it as a sort of political revenge on the Congress leaders like Nehru who refused to take two Muslim League nominees in the U.P. cabinet after Muslim league lost 1937 elections and Nehru was responsible for this. Maulana Azad tried to persuade Nehru to take the two nominees but unfortunately Nehru did not budge. Some scholars suggest that Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, an influential Congress leader from U.P. prompted Nehru. Whatever the reason political it was unwise not to take two Muslim league nominees. Maulana Azad has pointed this out and has criticized Nehru on this count in his political biography *India Wins Freedom*.

For Jinnah it was outright betrayal and he decisively turned against Congress and gradually it led Jinnah to propounding two nation theory. Thus two nation theory was a politically contingent proposition rather than any religiously grounded proposition. Had Nehru shown little political sagacity this theory would not have come into existence at all. And in no sense of the word Jinnah ever wanted to establish an Islamic state in Pakistan. Jinnah would not have even approved of Pakistan having Islam as an official religion. That was not his bent of mind. If one goes by Jinnah's speech in the Pakistan Constituent Assembly it is doubtful if he wanted even a Muslim state, let alone an Islamic state. He was all for a secular state in Pakistan.

Then if we call Jinnah communal in what sense can he be described as one? Or can he be? In those days when we were fighting for freedom of our country communalism was not opposite of secularism, but of nationalism. Anyone who was anti-national was described as communal. Thus if at all Jinnah could be described communal it is in this sense. And as pointed out above, Jinnah opted for partition not as a part of his conviction but as a result of political contingency.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was responsible in a way as he was not very happy with the Cabinet Mission Plan as it would have resulted in weak centre as except defence, foreign policy and communication all residuary powers would have rested with the federating states. Both Nehru and Sardar Patel were not happy with this scheme. And as Azad has pointed out in his book Nehru, on being elected as president of the congress in 1946, gave a statement that Cabinet Mission Plan could be, if necessary, changed. This infuriated Jinnah as Muslim League had also accepted the Plan and a composite Government was formed after 1946 fall elections.

This finally drove Jinnah to accept nothing less than partition. The greatest culprit was British rulers as they also wanted India divided so that they could easily establish intelligence and military base in Pakistan to stem the tide of revolution which by then had become a certainty in China. Nehru Government would have never allowed such bases in United India. Lord Mount Batten got Nehru, through his wife Advina to endorse the partition plan.

Thus it would be seen that apart from Jinnah the British and Nehru were also responsible for partition of the country. In my opinion the greatest responsibility of partition lay on the British shoulder. They cleverly maneuvered the complex situation in a way to make partition a reality. Partition, as Maulana Azad also pointed out, was neither in the interest of India nor in the interest of Muslims themselves.

The ultimate result of partition is that Muslims of Indian sub-continent stand divided into three units and Kashmir problem is also result of this tragedy. And both the countries are spending billions of rupees on their armies and now such powerful interests have developed in keeping conflict between the two countries alive that all efforts for talks fail. Now the only solution is in confederation of nations of South Asia, with no visa and common currency.

If European countries could form a viable union despite the fact that they were at each others throats until late forties why can't we in South Asia?



PARTITION CULPRIT: TO EACH ONE'S OWN

By Ram Puniyani

The Milli Gazette Online

Advani's statement on Jinnah (June 2005) also brought to fore one more debate, the one related to Partition of the subcontinent into India and Pakistan in 1947, some of the commentators and spokespersons of political parties criticised Advani for the 'Jinnah comment' on the ground that Jinnah was responsible for Partition of the country so how come we can call him a secular person. In this context many an opinions have been circulating as to who was the culprit of the partition tragedy.

One of the popular conceptions has been to blame Mahatma Gandhi for it. A section of Hindu Right wing had popularised that it was Gandhi's policy of appeasing the Muslims (does the term sound familiar!) due to which Muslims felt emboldened and went on to divide the country. Some opinions accuse Gandhi to the extent that since he had said that Partition would take place only on his dead body, how come he kept quiet and did not oppose Partition. One recalls that this was one of the pretexts of Nathuram Godse to kill the Mahatma. The other argument putting the blame on Gandhi comes on the premise that Gandhi went on to build and lead the anti-British movement and in turn unleashed the forces which partitioned the country.

According to other opinion, it was Nehru's ambition to become prime minister that Partition took place. George Fernandes while rushing to the defense of Advani said similar thing, that Nehru backed out from the Cabinet Mission plans, so it was Nehru who was responsible for Partition. Not to be left behind Communists with their formulation of 'Muslims are a separate Nationality', a confused definition of nationality, is yet another in the list of culprits. This argument, for some, is that the communists by providing the theoretical justification to the demand of Pakistan are the primary culprits.

One is sure that the popular perception in Pakistan must be that Hindus were dominating, the Congress, Hindu mahasabha, and

RSS were bent on depriving the Muslims of the equality so Jinnah saved the Muslims by demanding a separate state to safeguard the interests of the Muslims of the country.

What is striking in these popular narratives is the omission of the role, which British played in the partitioning of the country. Partition process is generally perceived as the story of a Hindi film, easy to understand, a hero, a villain, one black, one white and so the understanding becomes easy. No straining of the thought process. It is another matter that one group's hero is another group's villain and vice versa.

It also reminds one that in this singling out a villain there is an attempt to identify the individual who played this role. Some researchers with easy thinking see the whole tragedy as a clash of ego of the personalities. Nothing can be shallower than this. Most surprising part is the total blindness to the role of British in the process. It is also reminiscent of the story of elephant and the blind men, each blind man constructing his own elephant according to his own experience or whatever.

Partition was no simple process. It was a multi-layered phenomenon in which interests of different classes, the goals of colonial powers and the real politic of the political parties and the individuals all contributed their own share resulting in the tragedy of mammoth proportions. This was a tragedy of which scars are difficult to erase till today. Apart from the role of British, the colonial powers, the second major factor, which is not much grappled with, there were the diverging interests of the declining classes, landlords and kings and some middle classes on one hand and the rising classes, industrialists, a section of middle classes and the vast mass of peasantry on the other. Also somewhere totally missing in the narratives is the conflict between the pre-modern hierarchy of caste and gender and the values of liberty, equality, and fraternity.

The process of Partition was a multi-layered phenomenon. The base of this was the conflicting interests of landed gentry and those who survived on industries and those striving for equality at social, economic and gender levels. With the introduction of changes towards modernity the rise of educated classes, and industrialists was the major factor to form the core of national movement, against the colonial powers. While a lot of parallelism can be deciphered in the response of two major religious communities, the major difference in the response is due to the majority and minority responses being different in their articulation and

expression.

The feudal classes responded to the formation of Indian National Congress by throwing up of the opposition to this party by the Rajas, Nawabs, Jamindars and Jagirdars. Congress, which used the prefix Indian, was opposed by the ideologies coming from Muslim elite as being a party of Hindu interests. At the same time the Hindu elite called it as the most unfortunate thing to have ever happened to Hindus as the Congress was treating the Muslims equally. The ‘appeasement of minorities’ formulation has its roots here. While Sir Syed told fellow Muslims to keep off the Congress, Pandit Lekhram called the Congress as the biggest misfortune for Hindus. Ignoring these people, people from of all religions joined this political process, which acted as an umbrella for all the political tendencies as well. The crystallization of Muslim communalism into Muslim League and Hindu communalism into, first Punjab Hindu Sabha and later Hindu Mahasabha, which was to be supplanted by the RSS, took place in due course of time. I will not go into the minute details of all the events, steps and the individual ambitions in this tragic drama but try to focus on the diversity of class interests of the people of India, some involved in the anti colonial struggle and others witnessing the national movement from the sidelines.

Muslim and Hindu communalisms were based on the understanding that religion is the base of nation state. While superficially opposing each other their basic premise was the same. It came up in the form of Muslim League asserting that Muslims were a separate nation since Mohammad bin Kasim first attacked Sindh and later Muslim went on to rule the country. On the same wavelength the Hindu communalists stuck to the ideology that India was a Hindu Nation and the foreigners, Muslims and Christians would have to respect this fact. Savarkar's Hindutva or ‘who is a Hindu’ was the first major theoretical outpouring establishing religion as the base of a nation. In Hindu Mahasabha sessions Nepal Naresh (Emperor) was prominently upheld as the monarch of all the Hindus World over. In 1938, Hindu Mahasabha President Bhai Parmanand was forthright in stating that, “Mr Jinnah argues that there are two nations in the country. If Mr Jinnah is right and I believe he is, that the Congress theory of building common nationality falls to the ground. The situation has got two solutions, one is the partition of the country into two and the other to allow Muslim state to grow within Hindu state.”

RSS ideologue Golwalkar was more forthright to state that India is a exclusive Hindu nation and minorities are to be dealt with the

way Hitler dealt with Jews and others, “To keep up with the purity of the nation and its culture, Germany shocked the world by purging the country of the Semitic races — the Jews. National pride at its highest has been manifested here.” (MS Golwalkar, *We or Our nationhood Defined*, Nagpur, 1938, p. 27). The Muslim communalists were gradually shifting towards demand for a separate nation, Pakistan, and its culmination came in the form of Lahore resolution of 1940. While a section of Muslim elite was behind this resolution, large sections of Muslim community were against this.

In 1940s the communalists resorted to blatant propaganda against the other community laying the foundation of the communal violence in times to come. The second offshoot of this was sections of middle classes gravitating to communalism in larger numbers. The surface phenomenon of these did get manifested in the contrasting stands, which the communalists on one hand and the national movement on the other hand took the primary reason for Jinnah to leave the Congress and become the spokesman of Muslim League was not because of his being a Muslim or an ardent Islamic follower. Primarily these were the aristocratic, constitutional values and his opposition to the mass movement, the participation of masses in the anti-British struggle. Interestingly both communal streams, Muslims and Hindus kept aloof from the national movement and did not have the mass participation of broad sections of society. Both were again not the subjects of British repression.

The role of British is the one least criticised in the popular opinion and common sense. British saw this country inhabited mainly by Muslims and Hindus. This was not the popular consciousness or identity at that time but in due course it became the primary identity. Their steps, to recognise the Muslim feudal elements as the representatives of Muslims, their dubbing the Congress as representative of Hindus, partition of Bengal on communal lines, separate electorates and communal award clearly sowed the seeds of divide and rule policy. The colonial masters were clear that an undivided India will be a big player on the world political scene threatening their primacy and jeopardizing their interests in the subcontinent. Jaswant Singh while reviewing one of the books on Partition recalls an interesting incident. Lord Wavell before coming to India went to meet Churchill who was very busy at that time. As a substitute for the discussion on the matter he asked Wavell if the plan to give freedom to India was afoot. Churchill told him to ensure that part of India was kept for ‘us’, meaning colonial powers. A large presence of US troops on the Pakistani

land and its acting as the base of US and hatchet man of imperialists today shows the foresight of colonial powers and the means they adopt to see that their interests are safe and secure.



-4-

PARTITION AND THE HUMAN TRAGEDY

By Irfan Engineer

15th August 2007 was celebrated with much festivity as our 60th Independence Day. The Independence Day also brings sad memories of partition and the human tragedy associated with drawing artificial boundaries and dividing the people accompanied by exchange of population. Lakhs of South Asians suffered on both the sides of the borders. Though Pakistan is an accepted fact and it is neither possible nor desirable to turn the clock of history back, the artificial division has left a deep scar on psyche of both nations. Hundreds of stories, novels and films have been made on the subject. Many accounts of real human sufferings due to partition have been published and can still bring tears in the eyes of the narrators as well as listener. Memories of sufferings that accompanied with partition still survive and shape our lives.

Muslims who were forced to cross the border and migrate to Pakistan, and a few who migrated voluntarily for greener pastures, still live turbulent lives in Pakistan and are called "mohajirs" or immigrants. The mohajirs have not been embraced by the Pakistani Society and are still treated as outside immigrants. Their economic status has also declined along with their decreasing political clout. There have been often riots between sindhis and mohajirs, as also with other ethnic communities and the mohajirs have suffered tremendous loss in these riots. Altaf Hussain, leader of Mohajir Qaumi Movement, a political party which represents the interest of the mohajirs has been living in London. Urdu is considered as a language of immigrants and ethnic Sindhis, Punjabis and Pakhtoonis are more proud of their language. The mohajirs have still rich memories of their childhood and the composite culture. "Door Rahile Majhe Ghar" is a Marathi play about one such Muslim family which migrated from Konkan Region of Maharashtra to Pakistan and feels alienated from his culture. General Musharaf when he first came to India as a President of Pakistan had his desire of visiting the locality where he spent his

childhood fulfilled. Even L.K. Advani when he visited Pakistan visited the areas where he had spent his childhood. The Hindus who were forced to migrate from Pakistan due to partition also have fond memories of their childhood and the composite culture and traditions of the village from where they were forced to migrate. When they get opportunity to visit Pakistan, they inquire about their neighbours whom they left behind, and the neighbours too remember them and are happy to see them. Unlike the mohajirs, the immigrant sharnanrthis have been embraced by the Indians and they are not referred anymore as sharnarthis. There are of course, bitter memories about the goons and religious fundamentalists who assaulted them and looted their properties. These varied memories have shaped thinking and social outlook of hundreds of South Asians. On one hand we have right wing nationalist forces who use religion and religious symbols to signify nationalism which is based on hatred of the "other" on both sides of the border. We have Shiv Sena, RSS and other organizations based on ideology of Hindutva who day in and day out create misconceptions and question the loyalty of the Muslims to the India. The right wing extremist Muslim organizations carry out similar propaganda against the minorities in Pakistan and their political goal on one hand is to relegate the minorities to the status of second class citizens having no rights and on the other hand build a authoritarian state that would control, regulate and even impose a certain religious interpretation or cultural practices. On the other hand, these memories have also created passion amongst peoples of both the countries for friendship and solidarity, even when a section of politicians and their ideologies may be demonizing the other day in and day out and even taking both the countries to the brinkmanship of confrontation and war. The Indians who have visited Pakistan and the Pakistanis who visit India experience unprecedented warmth and hospitality which comes so natural to people of both the countries.

The right wing nationalist forces in India have always held Muslims alone for creation of Pakistan. Even Muslims of this generation are in many subtle ways held responsible for creation of Pakistan. Holding Jinnah and Muslim League responsible for creation of Pakistan is one thing, but holding Muslims, including those of the present generation responsible for Pakistan is misleading. Muslim League till the election held in 1946, was never a popular party at the hustings. In 1937, when elections were held under the government of India Act, 1935, Muslim League, even under a pact with Congress lost elections miserably. It won only about 102 of 480 odd Muslim constituencies which constituted separate Muslim electorates. In the Muslim Majority

provinces of Punjab, Bengal and North West Frontier Province, elections were won by Unionist Party of Sikander Hayat Khan, Praja Krishak Party led by Fazlul Haq and Congress led by Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan won elections and formed government respectively. Muslim League lost miserably in all the Muslim Majority provinces and it did not enjoy any support. Muslim League won seats in provinces of UP and Bihar where Muslims were in minority and Muslim League always stood for the rights of minorities. When Muslims in the provinces where they formed majority voted for parties which were not based on religious ideologies, how can Muslims alone be blamed for creation of Pakistan?

Congress and Muslim League had once again agreed to Cabinet Mission Plan in 1946 and were to contest elections together and the demand of Pakistan was shelved. However, some Congress Leaders were unhappy that the provinces were to enjoy most of the power while the Centre would have very limited powers. Lack of strong Centre and centralized economic policies and taxation, in their view would have hindered economic development and industrialization. The feudal forces would be more powerful in the provinces and enjoy all the powers. Jawaharlal Nehru in a press conference held after he was elected as President of Congress made a statement that Cabinet Mission Plan was not sacrosanct and could be reviewed. Jinnah got the opportunity he wanted and could mobilize the Muslims saying that the "Hindu" Congress was untrustworthy. Muslim elites also then rallied behind Muslim League as they lost confidence in secular Congress. In the elections held in 1946, Muslim League won about 85% of Muslim votes from the insecure Muslim elites. It should be remembered here that only elites who had certain educational qualifications or paid taxes were enfranchised. The poorer and backward sections of the community who were not enfranchised and constituted 90% of the Muslim population was mobilized not under the banner of Muslim League but by religious leaders under the banner of Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Hind which supported the Congress Party and opposed Pakistan. The irony is that a section modern Muslims supported Pakistan more for their political and economic interests rather than religious concerns, whereas the conservative religious leadership opposed Pakistan and stood for composite nationalism. It is not Islam which created Pakistan , but the social, political and economic interests of the Muslim elite that can be held responsible for creation of Pakistan.



-5-

MAULANA AZAD AND PARTITION

Asghar Ali Engineer

(Secular Perspective September 1-15, 2009)

In the current debate on partition started by Jaswant Singh's book every one is talking about the role of Jinnah, Nehru and Sardar Patel in partitioning of India but hardly anyone has mentioned what Maulana Azad, an important leader of Indian National Congress and an eminent scholar of Islam who held post of President of the Congress for six long years before partition, had done to avert partition.

It is true that Maulana was also party to the Congress Working Committee (CWC) resolution accepting partition but besides this Maulana Azad had never accepted partition and had warned Jawaharlal Nehru of certain of his acts which politically were not wise and may result in alienation of Jinnah or in partition. Pandit Nehru was not for weak centre and hence he consciously contributed to contribution but Azad had no such interest in partition and wanted to prevent it. He supported it only as something inevitable.

To understand Maulana Azad's viewpoint his own book *India Wins Freedom* and the 30 pages which were published 30 years after his death. About partition Maulana had definite point of view that cannot be ignored if we have to understand the genesis and causes of partition. Maulana Azad was an important leader of the Congress, on one hand, and on the other, an important leader of Muslims and a great religious scholar. Hence his views and role assume added significance.

Maulana Azad had passionate commitment to freedom of India and as youngest president of the Congress in Ramgarh session had said, in his presidential address that if an angel descends from heaven with gift of freedom of India and declares from Qutub Minar that India is a free country I would not accept it unless Hindus and Muslims are united as if India does not get freedom it is India's loss but if Hindus and Muslims do not unite it is entire humanity's loss. Thus Maulana Azad was passionately committed

to Hindu-Muslim unity and would in no case agree to partition for personal reason, whether centre remains weak or strong.

It would be interesting to mention here Maulana's views on Pakistan. Maulana writes in *India Wins Freedom*:

"I must confess that the very term Pakistan goes against my grain. It suggests that some portions of the world are pure while others are impure. Such a division of territories into pure and impure is un-Islamic...Furthermore, it seems that the scheme of Pakistan is a symbol of defeatism and has been built up on the analogy of the Jewish demand for a national home. It is a confession that Indian Muslims cannot hold of their own in India as a whole and would be content to withdraw to a corner specially reserved for them...."

Over 90 million in number, they are in quantity and quality a sufficiently important element in Indian life to influence decisively all questions of administration and policy. Nature has further helped them by concentrating them in certain areas. In such a context, the demand for Pakistan loses all force. As a Muslim, I for one am not prepared for a moment to give up my right to treat the whole of India as my domain and share in the shaping of its political and economic life. To me it seems a sure sign of cowardice to give up what is my patrimony and content myself with a mere fragment of it.

The Maulana then examines the consequences of partition quite objectively. Thus he says:

"Let us consider dispassionately the consequences which will follow if we give effect to the Pakistan scheme. India will be divided into two states, one with a majority of Muslims and the other of Hindus. In the Hindustan State there will remain three and half crores of Muslims scattered in small minorities all over the land. With 17 per cent in U.P., 12 per cent in Bihar and 9 per cent in Madras, they will be weaker than they are today in the Hindu majority provinces. They have had their homelands in these regions for almost a thousand years and built up well-known centres of Muslim culture and civilization there.

They will awaken overnight and discover that they have become alien and foreigners. Backward industrially, educationally and economically, they will be left to the mercies to what would become an unadulterated Hindu raj.

On the other hand, their position within the Pakistan State will be vulnerable and weak. Nowhere in Pakistan will their majority be comparable to the Hindu majority in the Hindustan States.

In fact their majority will be so slight that it will be offset by the economical, educational and political lead enjoyed by non-Muslims in these areas. Even if this were not so and Pakistan were overwhelmingly Muslim in population, it still could hardly solve the problem of Muslims in Hindustan.”

Also, the fear that if Pakistan is not formed the Centre with Hindu majority will interfere in Muslim majority provinces, Maulana counters by the argument (which was what the Cabinet Mission Plan was about) “The Congress meets this fear by granting full autonomy to the provinces. It has also provided for two lists of Central subjects, one compulsory and none optional so that if any provincial unit so wants, it can administer all subjects itself except a minimum delegated to the Centre. The Congress scheme, therefore ensures that Muslim majority provinces are internally free to develop as they will, but can at the same time influence the Centre on all issues which affect India as a whole.”

Thus Maulana was not opposing partition only as a congress leader but also with full conviction as a wise Muslim who could foresee far reaching consequences. Maulana Azad, unlike other politicians, was a far sighted leader both of Muslims and of whole of India also. What Maulana has said in his opposition to Pakistan is clearly borne out in post-partition period.

Actually Indian Muslims as a whole lost much more than others. They were fragmented and divided. Had Pakistan not been formed today there would have been more than 33 per cent Muslims, a huge number in any democracy. In any case they would have formed their own government in the Muslim majority provinces and would have had stake in whole of India. Several Muslim leaders could have become prime minister of India.

Maulana says, according to the numbers of Muslims than in India that Pakistan will result in only 9 crores of Muslims in Hindustan, scattered throughout the country. Today there are about 15 crores of Muslims but are still a minority and face several problems as minority and also have to carry the guilt – wrongly of course – of having partitioned the country. Ironically there are more Muslims in India than in Pakistan and yet they constitute only 14 per cent minority.

Also, Pakistan could not remain united and fell into two pieces as Bengali Muslims could not carry on with West Pakistani Muslims for more than 25 years. Thus whole sub-continent got divided into three parts. Had partition not taken place in 1947, what is Bangla Desh today would also have been part of united India. Also, democracy has eluded Pakistan in post-partition period and it has become totally dependent on American aid and military has remained, and will remain for foreseeable future, politically influential even if democracy lasts longer in Pakistan.

Though Maulana Azad does not mention it as that problem had not arisen then, there would have been no Kashmir problem either. Kashmir either would have become independent or would have enjoyed autonomy like other Muslim majority areas and thousands of Kashmiris would not have lost their lives as they did due to dispute between India and Pakistan today.

Also, both India and Pakistan spend astronomical sums on maintaining their armies. What for? Only due to fear of each other. There would have been only one army for the whole country and we would have spent much less on our army and could have faced external threats, specially from China much more effectively. What is much more important thing is that we would not have faced terrorism as both Pakistan and India are facing today. Terrorism alone has consumed thousands of life and huge amounts on armament.

Maulana Azad, in those thirty pages which were published thirty years after his death blames both Nehru and Sardar Patel. According to the Maulana, Nehru made a mistake by refusing to take two Muslim League members as cabinet ministers after provincial elections in 1937 in U.P. It made Jinnah distrustful of the Congress leaders whom he began to describe as 'Hindu' leaders.

Second mistake committed by Jawaharlal Nehru was his statement to the press in July 1946 after taking over as president of the Congress in which he said Cabinet Mission Plan could be changed. Muslim League and Congress both had accepted the Plan and to give such statement in an atmosphere of distrust and mutual suspicion was certainly a mistake. That finally drove Jinnah to insist on partition. And Britain could achieve what they had wanted.

What Muslims in what is Pakistan today?



SOCIAL ROOTS OF PARTITION PROCESS

by Ram Puniyani

(Source: *Issues In Secular Politics- No.2, Vol 1,(Jan II 2002)*)

The partition tragedy has been a multifaceted phenomenon in which lot of factors played their role. Unmindful of that, various formulations are popularized to suit the political interests of vested interests. One of the most common causes for partition, propounded by the RSS and its progeny (Sangh Parivar, SP), has been that it was Gandhi's appeasement of Muslims, which emboldened them to demand Pakistan. Also, Jinnah has been given the 'distinction' of the man who broke up India by some of the scholars. A new theory comes from Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi. According to him CPI's resolution on linguistic and religious nationalism provided Muslim League with the logic of the much-needed 'Two Nation theory'. While RSS chief Mr. Sudarshan states that as the division of India has been done into Muslim Pakistan and Hindu India, so the to complete the partition process Muslims should be packed off to Pakistan and Hindus from Pakistan should be brought back.

Partition tragedy needs to be related to the complex social roots and the goals of imperial powers in the region. With the control of India by British, to plunder its raw materials and to create the market for their industrial goods, railways, telegraphs and modern education were introduced. Due to this came up group of Industrialists, educated civil servants, professionals, modern businessmen and workers. These groups started forming various citywide and region wide associations, the culmination of which took place in the formation of Indian National Congress (INC). This organization started putting forward the demands related to more provisions for industrialists to set up their industries here, bigger role in local administration, better facilities for education and land ceiling. Rising assertion of newly emerging classes put the Feudal lords and Kings of princely states, belonging to both religions, to unease, and they came together to form United India Patriotic Association (UIPA) just a couple of years after the formation of INC. This association condemned the INC demands and saw this as an indication of disloyalty to the British crown.

They resolved to cultivate the loyalty of local population for the Queen of England. Incidentally it was the same decade in which communal riots began for the first time. Over a period of time mainly due to the British policy of divide and rule this association gave way to the formation of religion-based bodies like Muslim League (ML) and Hindu Mahasabha (HM). Remarkably the leadership of these organizations was coming from the same sections that formed the UIPA.

Later on RSS also joined in as another outfit for the 'building of Hindu Nation', it had predominant support base from Brahmin and traditional Bania communities. Most remarkably these both outfits (ML on one side and HM+RSS on the other) spewing venom against each other shared the common premise of Nationalism in the name of religion. The only difference being that HM+RSS said it is a Hindu Nation so people of other faiths have to remain subordinate to Hindus if they do not accept Hindu culture, while ML asserted that since Muslims are separate Nation and they should have a separate country to themselves. They were critical of National movement led by INC, and most significantly they shared the same class base to a great extent (Kings, Feudal Lords)

With INC's movement becoming mass movement, people from different communities irrespective of their religion started joining it. This movement was the movement for India Nation in the making. For this nationalism the Nationalism propounded by ML and HM+RSS was like a fly in the ointment but this fly was given life and blood by the British policies in a very subtle and overt ways. While Muslim League was overtly recognized and acted as 'the representative of Muslims', unmindful of the fact that majority of Muslims were with the INC. The majority Muslims stalwarts, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan being the most well known amongst them, the Olemas of Barevi and Deoband School, all supported this Nationalism. The Hindu Nationalists though they were not 'officially' recognized as the representatives of Hindus, they were merrily operating through the INC itself. The foundation of Two Nation theory emerged parallel amongst Hindu Nationalists and Islamist Nationalist. Savarkar articulated it most powerfully in his 'Post Andaman' book, 'Who is a Hindu', while Chowdhary Rahmat Ali conceptualized Pakistan (Punjab, Afghans, Kashmir, Sind) around 1930s.

The negotiations for the single united country were bound to fail with these diverse pulls, pressures and machinations. In the wake of Nehru committee (1927), Muslim League kept certain demands,

which though accepted initially, had to be backtracked due to the pressure of Hindutva elements. Again in 1937 elections first the request for joint alliance with ML was rejected and later the request to accommodate it in the ministry was rejected by Nehru on the ground that he was keen on land reforms and alliance with feudal elements of ML will make it impossible to achieve the same. Similarly after accepting the Cabinet mission plan, which called for a federation of states, Nehru practically backed out on the ground that for a proper development of a strong center is a must.

This was like the last straw on the camel's back after which Jinnah became adamant on his demand for a separate homeland for Muslims.

It is worth noting that the popular support for ML or HM as reflected in the election results shows that both these parties had a very narrow base, and both these had abysmal performance at the hustings. The passing of Pakistan resolution in Lahore in 1940 was met with a march of thousands of Ansari Muslims to oppose it. As ML used the religious symbolism it succeeded in raising a bogey of demand for Pakistan, due to the emotional appeal associated with the propaganda laced in religious idiom. So it gave the impression as if all Muslims are in support of the Pakistan. The Two Nation theory was repeatedly proclaimed from the sessions of ML and HM, In 1937 Hindu Mahasabha Session a resolution was passed stating that Hindus and Muslims are two separate Nations. While a year later Bhai Paramanand in his Presidential address stated that "Mr. Jinnah argues that there are two nations in the country If Mr. Jinnah is right, and I believe that he is right then the congress theory of building a common Nationality falls to the ground. This situation has two solutions, one is the partition of the country into two and the other is to allow to grow the Muslim state within the Hindu state."

We can see here that the failure of negotiations had more than what meets the eye. The goals and perceptions of different actors in this play were different. Jinnah under the mistaken notion that ML represents all the Muslims and following the communal vision of politics like its counterpart HM+RSS, assumed that 'Hindu' INC will subjugate the interests of Muslims once the British left. Mahatma Gandhi kept brokering peace all through, at all occasions but here Nehru and Patel's wish to have a strong center finally broke the possibility of negotiations and compromise. Nehru wanted a strong center so that the development could be done in a planned manner and landlordism could be abolished, while Patel

wanted a strong center for an overall strong state. It was a tragedy, which played with lives of millions and its ghost continues to haunt us till the day. The result of the partition was a truncated Pakistan, which further broke down into Bangla Desh and Pakistan, just to prove that religion cannot be the basis of Nation states, and India, did inherit the mantle of struggle for independence, the values emerging from the biggest mass movement of twentieth century, the values of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. It came up as the true representative of the aspirations of the participants of the freedom struggle for whom their Indian ness bound them in a single thread. For them religion was not the primary identity. For them a composite Indian Nationalism rising above the other varieties of narrow nationalism (Race, Language, Religion) was the primary principle of society and country. It is precisely these values, which came to be enshrined in our constitution.

At this point to say that the two Nation theory got boost from the CPI resolution is nothing but travesty of truth. We have seen the genesis of Two Nation Theory and its sustenance by ML and HM+RSS had been going on for decades before CPI resolution came up. About Sudarshan's statement the less said the better. It is no surprise that this patriarch of Hindu Rashtra politics can never understand as to what Indian Nationalism is.

His ideology and organization was never a part of Indian National movement barring few exceptions. The concept of secular democracy is Greek and

Latin to the followers of Hindutva ideology. Could the concept of Secularism and Indian Nationhood come up and survive without the crucial

contribution of all the communities to the process of Indian Nation building? India and Indian secularism survive because most of the people of India choose to be Indians first by rejecting the narrow Nationalism based on Religion, be it Muslim Nationalism or Hindu Nationalism.



REVIEW ARTICLE

Jinnah and Partition

A.G. NOORANI

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Mohammed Ali Jinnah with Mahatma Gandhi.

The Century has given birth to a great epoch; but the great moment finds a petty generation.

- Goethe

THE world waited long for the dawn of India's independence, but what it witnessed was, in the immortal words of Faiz, a stained dawn: India was partitioned amidst bloodshed. Its independence was inevitable. Its partition was not.

Many had mooted it. If V.D. Savarkar propounded the two-nation theory in 1923, Lala Lajpat Rai proposed partition in *The Tribune* of December 14, 1924: "A clear partition of India into a Muslim India and a non-Muslim India." Punjab and Bengal were to be partitioned as well. The Muslim League's Lahore Resolution of March 23, 1940, brought the idea into the mainstream of politics. Mohammed Ali Jinnah used the two-nation theory in its justification.

The evidence is *irrefutable* that it was a bargaining counter he had to devise because in 1939 the Viceroy kept asking him for a concrete "alternative":

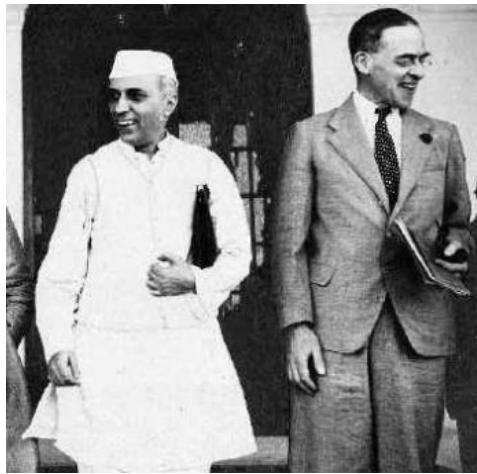
(1) A Working Committee draft of October 22, 1939, spoke of a "confederation of free states". (2) On January 19, 1940, Jinnah wrote of two nations "who both must share the governance of their *common motherland*". (3) Only 24 hours earlier, the draft provided for "a central Agency... the Grand Council of the United Dominions of India". Jinnah dropped it to raise the price. (4) The Lahore Resolution itself envisaged a centre for the *interim* period ("finally"), a typical Jinnah tactic for bargaining. (5) An English friend of Penderel Moon "who knew Jinnah" was told, "in reply to his expressions of surprise at such a dramatic revolution... that it was a tactical move". (6) There is overwhelming testimony by several of Jinnah's confidants. I.I. Chundrigar, a Leaguer close to him, told H.V. Hodson, the Reforms Commissioner, in April 1940 that the object of the Lahore Resolution was not to create "Ulsters" but to achieve "two nations... welded into *united* India on the basis of equality". It was, he added, an alternative to majority rule, not a bid to destroy India's unity. Jinnah himself told Nawab Mohammed Ismail Khan, one of the few who thought for himself, in November 1941, that he could not come out with these truths "because it is likely to be misunderstood especially at present". But "I think Mr. Hodson finally understands as to what our demand is." (Hodson regarded it as a bid for a set-up on "equal terms" motivated by the fear that Muslims might be reduced to being "a Cinderella with trade union rights and a radio in the kitchen but still below-stairs".) (7) Professor R.J. Moore's *Escape from Empire* refers to a file in the Jinnah papers in Pakistan's archives containing his correspondence with Cripps in 1942 on "the creation of a new Indian Union". Significantly, it is still embargoed. (8) On April 25, 1946, he was offered two alternatives - the Pakistan as it came to be established in 1947 or an Indian Union superimposed on groups of Muslim provinces. Jinnah rejected the first and said he would consider the second if Congress did the same. His own proposals of May 12 envisaged not Pakistan but a confederation. (9) Mumtaz Daultana, a prominent Leaguer of Punjab, told Ayesha Jalal: "Jinnah never wanted a Pakistan which involved the partition of India and was all in favour of accepting the Cabinet Mission's proposals" of May 16, 1946; which he did. (10) Documents in Volume VI of *The Transfer of Power 1942-47* record top League leaders like Nazimuddin and Ispahani of Bengal, Saadullah of Assam, Aurangzeb Khan of the North West Frontier Province and Khaliquzzaman expressing their scepticism to Governors early in

1946. (11) Liaquat Ali Khan suggested federation, not confederation, to Stafford Cripps in 1942.

Sikandar Hyat Khan, Premier of Punjab, was opposed to Pakistan. The Governor of Punjab, H.D. Craik, wrote perceptively to the Viceroy on April 1, 1940: "It is reasonable at present to assume that Muslims would accept something less than partition, *but the longer time that elapses without any concrete alternative being put forward, the more the support and favour partition proposals are likely to receive from the Muslim masses, who will now follow Jinnah's lead blindly*" (emphasis added, throughout).

As Craik noted, a "concrete alternative" to Pakistan had *urgently* to be devised. That was not done. The "Muslim masses" fell for it. Jinnah became Quaid-e-Azam, inebriated with power. He could not possibly achieve Pakistan except by an accord with the Congress. He did not adopt a conciliatory approach; but mobilised mass support using abrasive rhetoric. He said at Kanpur on March 30, 1941, that "in order to liberate seven crores of Muslims where they were in a majority he was willing to perform the last ceremony of martyrdom, if necessary, and let two crores of Muslims be *smashed*". It is unlikely that he was prepared for that, which itself suggests the bargaining tactic he used. But "smashed" they were; thanks not least to the politics of an arrogant man who fancied that the Muslims of India were his to save or get "smashed".

The British government's statement on August 8, 1940, on India and the war said "it goes without saying that they could not contemplate transfer of... [power]... to any system of government whose authority is directly denied by large and powerful elements in India's national life. Nor could they be parties to the coercion of such elements into submission to such a government". In August Jinnah won the Pakistan he had demanded in March. He had now only to secure Muslims' support in the Pakistan provinces. The Congress also accepted the principle of non-coercion. *It made Pakistan inevitable by refusing to propound an alternative to it; by refraining from pointing out forcibly and at the outset that it entailed partition of Punjab and Bengal - and the loss of many a League leader's lands - and by treating Muslim Congressmen as irrelevant.*



Jawaharlal Nehru with Sir Stafford Cripps in 1946.

These volumes document the drift. The *Jinnah Papers* record his enormous success in mobilising the Muslim masses. Even during a long holiday in Srinagar he had to resolve the perpetual feuds among the League's provincial satraps. The *piece de resistance* are the minutes of his talks with Prem Nath Bazaz. He refused permission to print them.

Dr. K.M. Ashraf was a scholar, a member of the Communist Party of India and the All India Congress Committee (1934-45). Jaweed Ashraf has rendered a service by publishing this study written in 1946 for submission to CPI's general secretary, P.C. Joshi, who did not circulate this critique. Another volume on a similar theme is under publication. Volume 2 has the very revealing minutes of a talk that CPI leader Dr. Z.A. Ahmad had with Jawaharlal Nehru on June 27 and 28, 1945. One of the most brilliant pamphleteers of his day, Joshi's pamphlet, *They Must Meet Again*, on the Gandhi-Jinnah talks is a classic of its kind.

Lionel Carter's compilation is useful because all Governors of Punjab were in close touch with Prime Minister Sikandar Hyat Khan, a Leaguer out to espouse the flaws in the concept of Pakistan. He drew up a "formula" in July 1942. Its "underlying idea... is... to bring home to all... that Pakistan should it ever eventuate, would smash the Province as it now exists", the Governor reported. (The text of the formula is reproduced on page 317.) It stipulated that the Punjab Assembly could decide to join the Union or not only by a vote of three-fourths of the total membership. If it failed to secure such a vote, a referendum could follow. Its result would, in any case, entail partition of Punjab.

A similar formula was mooted in the proposals which Cripps made to Indian leaders on behalf of the British government in March 1942 - a Constituent Assembly set up immediately after the war; every province having the right to reject the Constitution, but if the majority in favour of accession was less than 60 per cent of the Assembly, the minority would be entitled to demand a plebiscite. Cripps also offered formulae on an interim government to conduct the war. The Cripps offer was rejected by the Congress and the League. Gandhi called it "a post-dated cheque on a tottering bank". But, for the first time ever, the partition of India was put as an item on the agenda.

The Congress' response to the League's demand was strange. On April 2, 1942, the Congress Working Committee (CWC) criticised the secessionist idea, only to add: "Nevertheless, the Committee cannot think in terms of compelling the people of any territorial unit to remain in the Indian Union against their declared and established will...." Its election manifesto of 1945 reiterated this principle, thus setting at naught the Jagat Narain Lal resolution, adopted by the AICC on May 2, 1942, which ruled out "liberty to any component State or territorial unit to secede".

The Congress would ridicule the Pakistan cry and call Jinnah names. It did not ask him searching questions on his vague demand nor demonstrate vigorously its consequences. *Its policy was to parley with the British for immediate transfer of power*, leaving Jinnah high and dry, and the communal issue one for it to settle unilaterally once it was in power.

C. Rajagopalachari, Nehru, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and M. Asaf Ali disagreed with Gandhi on the Quit India Movement. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad and others blindly followed him. Azad's memoirs *India Wins Freedom* (1959) was the first exposure of the truths behind the "do and die" cry and the commitment to non-violence. "Truth to tell... it was certainly not non-violent even at the start," K.M. Munshi admitted. Azad recalled: "Gandhiji's idea seemed to be that since the war was on the Indian frontier, the British *would come to terms with the Congress as soon as the movement was launched*. Even if this did not take place, he believed that the British would hesitate to take any drastic steps with the Japanese knocking at India's doors. He thought that this would give the Congress the time and the opportunity to organise an effective movement."

What was Azad's plan? "As soon as the Japanese army reached Bengal and the British army withdrew towards Bihar, the Congress

should step in and take over the control of the country... in this way alone could we hope to oppose the new enemy and gain our freedom.... " He had even recruited volunteers. "I was surprised to find that Gandhiji did not agree with me... if the Japanese army ever came to India it would come *not as our enemies but as the enemy of the British.*"

The AICC passed the Quit India resolution on August 8, 1942. The next morning the leaders were arrested. Gandhi was "very depressed... he had not expected this sudden arrest". He had come to believe that "the Allies could not win the war". Others agreed. Patel "felt convinced that the Allies were going to lose the war", Munshi recorded.

Unlike Nehru and Azad, Rajaji did not acquiesce in Gandhi's decision. He wrote to him on July 18: "It is essential that before a demand for withdrawal can be reasonably made, the major political organisations of the country namely, the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League, should evolve a joint plan with regard to the provisional government which can take over power." Gandhi retorted on July 20: "Why don't you form a *league* (sic) with Muslim friends to propagate your idea of settlement?"

It was a fundamental divide. Rajaji knew that transfer of power depended on accord with the League. Gandhi and the Congress sought a deal exclusively with the British. "I am not in favour of making any approach to Jinnah," Patel said when S. Satyamurthi pleaded in the Working Committee in April 1942 for "an approach to the Muslim League".

As in 1937-39, the Congress sought *total* power. The Pakistan resolution and Jinnah's growing popularity made not the slightest difference to its outlook. Rajaji shared Craik's view that "a concrete alternative" had to be evolved and "*urgently*", too - tell Jinnah he can have Pakistan, but what next? He got the Madras Congress Legislature Party to adopt the resolutions on April 23, 1942, to "acknowledge the Muslim League's claim for separation" and "invite" it to forge an accord on "a National government" to fight the war - against the Axis. The Leaguers "will themselves say that they don't want it if you do not keep it in your pocket but throw it on the table".

The Congress' plan was bizarre. In 1945, Nehru confided in Z.A. Ahmed: "I may tell you this but do not convey it to anyone else, that sometime before August 1942 Gandhiji gave in to me and others on the question of non-violence... he realised that he would

not be able to achieve his larger objective if he stuck on to non-violence... . Our estimate was that if the Japanese occupied the Eastern part of India, conditions of complete administrative disorder and anarchy would be created throughout the *unoccupied parts*... under these conditions our idea was to organise guerilla forces in order to capture power in territories where the administrative machinery was in a state of collapse." Since "no guerrilla bands can function without the help of the regular army" the possibility of the guerillas fighting the Japanese "in the front line... was ruled out". This confirms Azad's account.

Analysing this very episode in detail, Nirad C. Chaudhuri concluded that both Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose were simply ignorant of international affairs (*The Times of India*; February 28, 1982). He called Nehru "India's ineffectual angel" in a brilliant review article on the first volume of S. Gopal's biography (*The Times Literary Supplement*; November 14, 1975). Gandhi could control him with ease.

Remember, on June 22, 1941, Hitler attacked the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). On December 7, 1941, Japan attacked Pearl Harbour. The United States, the 'unsinkable aircraft-carrier', was at war with the Axis. True, Singapore fell on January 15, 1942, but as a historian records, by mid-June 1942 "the limit of Japanese power [was] reached". Nehru wrote in his prison diary on November 21, 1943: "My presumption in posing as the sole authority on international affairs is, no doubt, irritating" to the captive audience comprising Azad, Patel, and the rest. The diaries of one of them, Asaf Ali, reveal the enormity of the blunder in which they had acquiesced. (M. Asaf Ali's *Memoirs* edited by G.N.S. Raghavan; Ajanta, 1994; a neglected work.) He wrote: "A *bad gambler's throw has produced this situation*... . Gandhiji expected that a compromise would follow the adoption of the Quit India resolution" - the Brits would capitulate in the face of certain defeat.

YET, for all the havoc they had so irresponsibly wrought, the Congress leaders had learnt not a bit. They were sore at Rajaji for his formula in April 1944 - for a plebiscite on Pakistan in areas "wherein the Muslim population is in absolute majority" - and at Gandhi for his variant of this formula which he offered Jinnah during their talks on September 24, 1944. B.R. Ambedkar exposed the flaws in both formulae (*Pakistan or The Partition of India*; 1946; pages 408-411).

Its crux was division of India - if at all - by a Congress government after it had won power from the British. "The case became one of an executed promise [by Jinnah] against an executory promise" [by Gandhi]. It was vague on essentials. But Gandhi squandered away a fine opportunity to question Jinnah on the Lahore Resolution. Ambedkar listed seven questions. Gandhi asked instead: "What is your definition of `minorities'?" and "What is the connotation of the word `Muslim'... ?"

Nehru and Patel left prison in 1945 with a two-fold resolve - "the Congress should keep as far away from the League as possible", Nehru told the AICC on October 23. "This is war. We shall face the Muslim League and fight it." Patel concurred. The AICC extolled "the methods of negotiation and conciliation *vis-a-vis* the British... no matter how grave may be the provocation..." Ashraf remarked: "The Congress declared war on the League while at the same time, it adopted a policy of surrender towards British imperialism."

The British were ready to quit. The Congress sought a deal with them. Nehru talked of redressing Muslim grievance, but with whom? Congress Muslims had been marginalised completely. Nehru went so far as to demand on November 11, 1945, that the League must change "its present policy *and its leadership*". Patel reported to Gandhi on December 28, 1945, his reply to the Aga Khan's plea for talks with Jinnah: "We have decided not to have any truck with him." Gandhi replied on January 11, 1946: "Yours indeed was a fitting reply regarding Jinnahbhai." Nehru was perfectly consistent. He wrote in his diary on December 28, 1943: "Instinctively I think *it is better to have Pakistan* almost anything if only to keep Jinnah far away and not allow his muddled and arrogant head from (sic) interfering continually in India's progress" (*Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru*; First Series: Vol. 13, page 324). He accurately predicted: "I cannot help thinking that ultimately the Muslims of India will suffer most" (*ibid*; page 24). How was he going to avert that? Forget the League. Had the Congress anything to offer the Muslim minority in our plural society, if only to undermine Jinnah's hold on it?

In a letter to Cripps on January 27, 1946, Nehru hinted at his readiness to accept "separation" coupled with the partition of Punjab and Bengal. Publicly, however, the line was to reject Pakistan without propounding any alternative.

The British government sent a mediatory Mission of three Cabinet Ministers, Secretary of State for India Pethick-Lawrence, A.V.

Alexander and Stafford Cripps. It arrived in India on March 23, 1946, and left on June 30. On May 16, 1946, it published "the Mission's Plan". Partition was decisively rejected.

It envisaged a Union confined to defence, foreign affairs and communications based on three groups of provinces. The provinces were free to secede from the groups, after the first general elections under the scheme. *But they could not secede from the Union.* All they could ask for was "reconsideration of the terms of the Constitution" after 10 years. It would have been open to the provinces of Group A (the States which now form the Union of India) to confer on their group voluntarily subjects beyond the minimum subjects. Group B comprised Punjab, Sind, Baluchistan and the NWFP. Group C comprised Bengal and Assam. Far from establishing a "weak" centre, it would have yielded a strong centre, the India of today in Group A in federal union with Pakistan.

Paragraph 19 laid down the procedure, which the Constituent Assembly had to follow - "divide into three *sections*", which would "settle the powers and the constitutions for the *groups* and the provinces".

Patel wrote to Munshi the next day: "An authoritative pronouncement in clear terms has been made against the *possibility* of Pakistan in any *shape or form*." Both were accomplished lawyers. Azad exclaimed: "All schemes of partition of India have been rejected once and for all." But by the end of 1946, partition became an agreed inevitability. *In cases of contributory negligence, judges ask: "Who had the last clear chance to avert the accident?" This was the last clear chance to save India's unity. Blame for the partition must fall on those who wrecked Cabinet Mission's Plan.*

The circumstances in which Jinnah accepted it are as important as his acceptance was radical. Cripps had prepared Scheme A for a limited union and B for partition of India and of Punjab and Bengal. On April 25, Jinnah *preferred the union* to the Pakistan of today; but, only "if the Congress were prepared to consider it *and if he could be assured of that*". On May 12, both sides presented their proposals to the Mission. *Jinnah's was not for partition but a confederation.* In a settlement this bargainer would have improved on his own proposal. He did just that by his acceptance of the Plan. "I do not think any responsible man could have allowed the situation to give rise to bloodshed and civil war. The situation was such that we did, in all anxiety, try to come to a peaceful settlement with the other major party. We had the courage - it was

not a mistake - to sacrifice three subjects to the Centre. That has been treated with contempt and defiance by the Congress."

As K.M. Panikkar pointed out on October 10, 1945, no Constituent Assembly can succeed unless a Congress-League accord, on the basics and on the procedures, "is evolved *before*" it meets. The Plan was a proposal. Words like "we recommend" meant it was not an award. It became a pact between the Congress and the League if it was accepted. The British undertook to transfer power to a Union set up under the pact. Either side could reject it. Conditional acceptance is tantamount to rejection. Acceptance on the basis of one's own "interpretation" is a disingenuous form of rejection. The Plan laid down the fundamentals of both the Union and the Assembly. If they were set up under the Plan, the parties had to abide by the prescribed procedure. It was part of the deal. It said explicitly [para 19 (vii)] that the basics (the Union and the Groups) could not be changed nor "any major communal issue" decided except with the consent of both communities.

However, Patel claimed on May 26 that "it is open to the Constituent Assembly to accept or reject" the Mission's "recommendations". On June 15, he wrote: "We do not accept the groupings as proposed in the scheme." The Plan would be used only to enter the Assembly, not to work the compromise. The Congress would use its majority to do what it pleased. There would be no compromise with the League.

Nehru told the Mission in private on June 10: "The Congress were going to work for a strong centre and to break the group system and they would succeed. *They did not think that Mr. Jinnah had any real place in the country.*" On July 10, he told the press, after he had become Congress president: "What we do there [in the Constituent Assembly], we are entirely and absolutely free to determine. We have not committed ourselves to any single matter to anybody." This is the famous "outburst" which Nehru baiters and Congress apologists alike cite to explain the collapse of the Plan. It is pure myth. Patel had taken the same stand. Azad, who fostered the myth, said on June 26 as Congress president: "I am convinced that the Congress interpretation cannot be challenged." He signed the letter of June 24 intimating acceptance of the Plan, as interpreted by the Congress in a resolution on May 24. The Mission as well as Jinnah had rejected this interpretation on May 25 and June 27, respectively - before Nehru's "outburst" on July 10.

The Congress had 207 members in the Constituent Assembly against 73 of the League. In Group C, comprising Bengal and Assam, it had 32 members against 36 of the League, in a House of 70, with two Independents. Since the League would have had to provide a chairman to work Group C, it would have been left with 35 members against 32 of the Congress. How could the League possibly have prevented Assam's secession? If it did, it would have faced the Congress' retaliation in the entire Constituent Assembly, as the British repeatedly reminded the Congress. No gerrymandering could have prevented Assam's secession. Muslims were only a third of its population.

Once the Constituent Assembly began its work, compromises would have had to be worked out. But the Congress had set its face against any compromise from the outset. It went unilateral in 1942 under Gandhi's leadership. It adopted this stance in 1945-46 also. On both occasions, it was led by Gandhi and he led it from the front with grim determination. He laid down the line publicly and at the outset before others spoke. He told a prayer meeting the very next day after the Plan was out (May 17): "The provinces were free to reject the very idea of grouping... *subject to the above interpretation*, which he held was right", the Plan was a laudable one.

He wrote to Pethick-Lawrence on May 19: "You say in your answer to a question: 'If they do come together on that basis, it will mean that they will have accepted that basis, but they can still change it if *by a majority of each party they desire to do so.*' You can omit the last portion of the sentence as being superfluous for my purpose. Even the basis in para 15 of the State Paper is a recommendation. Do you regard a recommendation as obligatory on any member of the contemplated Constituent Assembly?"

Gandhi's detailed analysis, dated May 20, appeared in *Harijan* on May 26: "The best document the British government could have produced in the circumstances." He sought immediate transfer of power. The Plan was "an appeal and an advice... in my opinion, the voluntary character of the statement demands that the liberty of the individual unit should be unimpaired. Any member of the sections is free to join it. The freedom to opt out is an additional safeguard.

"A province could refuse at the outset to sit in the Section assigned to it and participate in its work. The procedure prescribed was what the Mission 'proposes' [does not order] what should be done."

The character of the place as a compact between the two parties was studiously ignored. It was a matter between the Congress and the British.

Gandhi met Pethick-Lawrence on May 19 to press his line after meeting the CWC. He asked for "the immediate end of Paramountcy" over the princely states and withdrawal of British troops. "Acceptance of 'Quit India' by the British is unconditional whether the Constituent Assembly succeeds or fails." He wanted a "homogeneous National Government", that is, one run by the Congress. This was the very line he took in 1942.

On May 25, the Mission issued a formal statement which said: "The interpretation put by the Congress resolution on paragraph 15 of the statement to the effect that the provinces can in the first instance make the choice whether or not to belong to the section in which they are placed does not accord with the Delegation's intentions."

The issue was squarely joined. On June 13, Gandhi wrote to Cripps ominously: "You will have to choose between the two - the Muslim League and the Congress." Implying there could be no compromise between the two on the basis of the Plan. He said at a meeting that day: "Even the Constituent Assembly plan now stinks. I am afraid we cannot touch it."

Cripps caved in (vide the writer's article "Cripps and India's Partition"; *Frontline*, August 2 and 16, 2002). A member of the Constituent Assembly had to give an undertaking "that the candidate is willing to serve as a representative of the Province for the purposes of paragraph 19 of the Statement".

This bound him to abide by the Plan once he became a member of the Constituent Assembly elected under the Plan and for its implementation. On June 24, the Mission and the Viceroy met Gandhi and Patel at 8 p.m. Gandhi felt that "by signing the declaration... a member of the Constituent Assembly might be bound morally to accept the Delegation's interpretation". Cripps agreed to the deletion (*The Transfer of Power*, Vol. VII; page 1,027). The Viceroy, Lord Wavell, furiously protested the next day: "I consider that there has either been a reversal of policy which has not been agreed, or that the assurance given to Mr. Gandhi is not entirely an honest one" (*ibid*; page 1,032). Prof. R.J. Moore holds that Wavell "justly described" it as "a dishonest assurance" (*Escape from Empire*, page 138).

The change was Gandhi's idea: "Why not say `under the State Paper as a whole'?" Cripps clutched at the straw. The Plan was scuttled effectively. On June 26, the CWC accepted Gandhi's formulation. "Taking the proposals as a whole", it decided to join the Assembly. Jinnah came to know all about this secret deal, he told Colin Reid of *The Daily Telegraph*.

The League withdrew its acceptance of the Plan and adopted the "Direct Action" resolution. Wavell, shaken after the Calcutta riots, tried to persuade Gandhi on August 27 to issue a declaration accepting the Plan as it was intended to be worked. He failed. He was convinced that "the Congress are practically asking us to hand over India to a single party".

To Louis Fischer, Gandhi said in confidence on July 17: "Jinnah is an evil genius. He believes he is a prophet." G.D. Birla was told on November 26 that the Plan "will probably have to be changed". He was not averse to "convening our own Constituent Assembly irrespective of the British government" provided the Congress had "a certain degree of status and strength".

Gandhi drew up a "note on the Constituent Assembly" on December 3, 1946. By then, first the Congress and later the League had entered the Interim Government. But the League boycotted the Constituent Assembly on the grounds that the Congress had not accepted the Plan. Gandhi sent his note to Patel on December 4 and wrote: "There is certainly no weakness on our part in giving up the Plan."

Despite his withdrawal, Jinnah had not given up on the Plan. From his queries to Sir B.N. Rau, Constitutional Adviser to the Constituent Assembly, "it is a fair inference that his mind had not been finally made up against the League's participation" in the Assembly, B. Shiva Rao of *The Hindu* noted. But if he entered it despite the Congress' stand, he would have accepted that stand, and the Congress' majority unfettered by the Plan. London invited Nehru, Jinnah and Baldev Singh for talks to resolve the tangle. Nehru did not yield. On December 6, the British government issued a statement which recorded that it had received "legal advice" that the Congress' interpretation was wrong.

It concluded: "There has never been any prospect of success for the Constituent Assembly, except upon the basis of an agreed procedure. Should a Constitution come to be framed by a Constituent Assembly in which a large section of the Indian population has not been represented, His Majesty's Government

could not of course contemplate - as the Congress have stated they would not contemplate - forcing such a Constitution upon any unwilling parts of the country." - Accept the Plan and share power, or partition India. The Congress preferred the latter.

On December 15, Gandhi told Congressmen from Assam: "As soon as the time comes for the Constituent Assembly to go into Sections, you will say, 'Gentlemen Assam retires.' Each unit must be able to decide and act for itself... . Else I will say that Assam had only manikins and no men. It is an impertinent suggestion that Bengal should dominate Assam in any way" - by 35 votes to 32, presumably.

As with the Plan, so with the statement, the Congress professed to accept it but subject to its interpretation. As late as on May 16, 1947, Mountbatten pleaded with Patel to accept the Plan. If the League misbehaved in Section C, it risked retaliation at the Centre, he pointed out. He had admitted to London on May 1, 1947, that Jinnah "might be right in... [his] belief" that the Congress had no intention of working the Plan "fairly" and that "Mr. Jinnah's fears had some foundation". The Plan was "dead". The Congress' stand led the British to declare on February 20, 1947, that power would be transferred by June 30, 1948, whether to a Union or to provinces. Like Cripps, Mountbatten plumped for the Congress. If he "fell foul of Congress it would be impossible to continue to run the country".

Not surprisingly, on March 8 the Congress asked for the partition of Punjab and Bengal and invited the League for talks. *Gandhi's note suggests that he was prepared for partition.* The Assembly could frame a Constitution "for all the Provinces, States and units that may be represented" in it. His instructions to the CWC removed all doubt. But it was to be a Pakistan minus not only Assam but also the NWFP, "the Sikhs in the Punjab and may be Baluchistan". He called them "seceders" from Groups B and C. The British would have to quit. "It will be open to the boycotters to avail themselves of the Constitution" framed "for whole India". Jinnah's truncated Pakistan would rejoin India (*Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol. 86; page 286).

Gandhi's reaction on February 24 to the British declaration shows the sharpness of his intellect: "This may lead to Pakistan for those provinces or portions which may want it... The Congress provinces... will get what they want."

He gave a formula on April 4: Jinnah to be Prime Minister of India - backed by a Congress majority in the Constituent Assembly and liable to a sack any moment. An elaboration of April 10 hinted at *partition* as an alternative to the League entering the Constituent Assembly. Thus the League was offered an Assembly freed from the Cabinet Mission's restrictions - with Jinnah as Prime Minister as a sweetener - or a Pakistan minus even the NWFP. When neither worked, he said on May 6: "The Congress should in no circumstances be party to partition. We should tell the British to quit unconditionally."

He wrote to Mountbatten on May 8 asking him to "leave the government of the whole of India, including the States, to one party". On June 3, 1947, the Partition Plan was published, which both the parties accepted. The next day Gandhi said: "I tried my best to bring the Congress round to accept the proposal of May 16. But now we must accept what is an accomplished fact."

H.M. Seervai's comment is fair: "It is sad to think that Gandhi's rejection of the Cabinet Mission's Proposal for an Interim Government and of Cabinet Mission's Plan should have had the unfortunate consequence of destroying the unity of a free India for which he had fought so valiantly and for so long" (*Partition of India*; 1994; page 177).

Sir Chimanlal Setalvad wrote: "The cherished boon of a United India had fallen into their (the Congress) lap, but they by their own want of political wisdom threw it out and made it beyond their reach." It was "a great personal triumph for Mr. Jinnah... But has he succeeded in doing good to the Muslims themselves and to his country?" Partition had laid "the foundations of interminable quarrels" and would "bring untold suffering to generations yet unborn" (*The Times of India*, June 15, 1947).

Azad told the Viceroy on April 8 that partition would "spell disaster for the Mussulmans". But Nehru and Patel were set on it. Gandhi, however, began campaigning against partition after his return to Delhi on May 24, driving Mountbatten to denounce him repeatedly in private as "a dangerous Trotskyist", a Wrecker. He found the change hard to understand. Gandhi, as well as Nehru and Patel, rejected the Sarat Bose-Suhrawardy pact on a united Bengal as a sovereign state. It would have buried the two-nation theory at the very birth of Pakistan. Jinnah told Mountbatten on April 6, 1947, that a united Bengal was acceptable to him. Gandhi, however, demanded for the minorities in united Bengal safeguards, which he would not concede to the minorities in a united India.

(vide the writer's essay on the united Bengal plan in *The Partition in Retrospect* edited by Amrik Singh; pages 246-258.)

Two men foresaw the consequences clearly. Azad predicted that the fate of Muslims going to Pakistan would be worse than that of uninvited guests (*Kamalistan*; March 1956; page 28). Nehru told Z.A. Ahmed that if the Congress accepted Pakistan "Hindu opinion inside the Congress would go over to the Hindu Sabha". He had noted in his *Autobiography* that "many a Congressman was a communalist under his nationalist cloak".

SINCE 1939, Jinnah played irresponsibly with fire. True, as R.C. Majumdar, a historian with a pro-Hindu Right bias, accepted, "one important factor which was responsible to a very large extent for the emergence of the idea of partition of India on communal bias... was the Hindu Mahasabha" (*Struggle for Freedom*, 1969; page 611).

But Nehru's and Jinnah's remedies - wholly different though they were - proved worse than the disease. Gandhi, a devout Hindu, was an enemy of communal violence. He was livid when idols were placed inside mosques. He said on November 30, 1947: "It is the duty of those who have installed the idols to remove them from there... By thus installing idols in the mosques they are desecrating the mosques and also insulting the idols" (*Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*; Vol. 90; page 144).

He would have given his life to save the Babri Mosque as, indeed, he did to save the Muslims.

It is men of fine qualities who failed India. It had no Nelson Mandela; a man of vision with a passion and talent to *reach out to the adversary* and compromise. The Congress leaders failed dismally. But Jinnah also could well have assured Assam publicly that it would not be coerced - and thus saved the Plan that he himself hailed as an achievement.

Jinnah's dream was shattered with the partition of Punjab and Bengal, and the massive killings. For a secular Pakistan, the presence of a large, powerful and articulate minority was indispensable. Their exodus also affected Muslims in India adversely. It is not in Pakistan but in India that the values of democracy and rule of law, which he cherished all his life, are respected. Yet, the fact remains that though he recklessly broke the mould of constitutional discourse and played with fire, the final

responsibility for partition was not his. He had "no real place in the country", Nehru had declared.

In a sense, Jinnah was an expellee whose dreams lie buried in India as well as in Pakistan. He might well have cried in the words the gifted poet Sahir Ludhianvi used when he was honoured by the Ludhiana Government College, which had expelled him for communist activities:

*Tu aaj bhi hai merey liye jannate khayal /hai tujh mein dafn meri
jawani ke chaar saal*

*Lekin hum in fizaon ke paaley huey to hain /Gar yan ke nahin to
yan se nikaley huey to hain*

(You are for me still the heaven of my dreams / On your grounds
lie buried four years of my youth.

But I have been very much brought up in its atmosphere/If I do not
belong to it, I was at least an expellee from this place).



JINNAH AND PAKISTAN

Irfan Engineer

Jinnah must be turning in his grave looking at the state of Pakistan he so assiduously worked for. In his first speech in the Constituent Assembly he said on 11th August 1947, “Now, if we want to make this great State of Pakistan happy and prosperous, we should wholly and solely concentrate on the well-being of the people,. If you change your past and work together in a spirit that everyone of you, no matter to what community he belongs, no matter what relations he had with you in the past, no matter what is his colour, caste or creed, is first, second and last a citizen of this State with equal rights, privileges, and obligations, there will be no end to the progress you will make.. You are free; you are free to go to your temples, you are free to go to your mosques or to any other place or worship in this State of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion or caste or creed that has nothing to do with the business of the State.. Now I think we should keep that in front of us as our ideal and you will find that in course of time Hindus would cease to be Hindus and Muslims would cease to be Muslims, not in the religious sense, because that is the personal faith of each individual, but in the political sense as citizens of the State.” Today’s Pakistan is anything but the vision of Pakistan that Jinnah had. What went wrong and why Jinnah’s dream could not be realized? The answer lies in the nature of party he was heading.

Muslim League, like its counter part, the Hindu Mahasabha and RSS defined nationalism, on the basis of religion. Savarkar used Hindu cultural symbols in his attempt to constitute Hindus into a political community and a nation. Muslim League followed the example of Hindu Mahasabha and argued that If Hindus constituted a nation, so did Muslims. Hindu Nationalists led by Savarkar and the Muslim League often colluded with British in opposing secular and inclusive nationalism of Indian National Congress and the freedom movement led by Congress which stood for equality, land reforms and industrialization. In 1942, when the nation led by Congress called upon the British to quit India, the Hindu nationalist and the Muslim League were colluding and conspiring with the British in opposing the Quit India movement. The Hindu nationalists and the Muslim League represented the feudal sections within their respective communities. Feudal classes

are always opposed to liberal politics based on equality and fraternity. They stand for birth based privileges and hierarchy. Jinnah, whatever his political liberalism, was heading a party dominated by feudal elements. He should have known better how far his views and leadership would be acceptable. Jinnah was anointed as a leader of the Muslim League not for his liberal views but his leadership was crucial for creation of Pakistan – to logically argue at the Round Table Conferences, before Cabinet Mission and other fora and to draw appropriate strategies.

Jinnah, forgoing his liberalism, was focused on creation of Pakistan. He acted as an advocate with brief on Pakistan. Where was Jinnah's liberalism when he claimed himself to be 'Quaid-E-Azam' and sole spokesperson of not the Muslim League but of the entire Muslim community – a preposterous position denying Muslims holding views different than his, a right to be represented? Muslim League won elections only from a few constituencies in UP and Bihar. In Muslim majority Bengal, Praja Krishak Party won elections and in Punjab, it is the Unionist Party which headed the government till elections held in 1946. In NWFP, Congress led by Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan was the predominant political force. Yet Jinnah insisted on being sole spokesperson of the Muslim community. Can we forget that call given by Muslim League for direct action in 1946 which led to most heinous riots in Calcutta taking toll of scores of innocents? Violence and British patronage played crucial role in deepening Muslim political identity. Jinnah remembered his liberalism only after creation of Pakistan and expected that the feudal dominated 'nation' that he created could be advised to cease to be Muslims. As expected, religion based politics of the powerful feudal lords used religion to justify their privileges and hierarchical order. Not only Muslim identity but Shia and Sunni conflict intensified; regional and linguistic conflicts intensified, ultimately leading to formation of Bangladesh.

Soon after Jinnah's death on September 11, 1948, the Muslim nation got rid of its liberal 'sole spokesperson' and the feudal elements started asserting. Contrast Jinnah's address to the Constituent Assembly with that of the first Prime Minister of Pakistan. Liaquat Ali Khan, a former Nawab, while presenting the "Objectives Resolution" that was passed by the first Constituent Assembly of Pakistan in 1949. The ideology of Pakistan is embodied in that resolution, which *inter alia*, provided that the principles of democracy, freedom, equality, tolerance and social justice as enunciated by Islam shall be fully observed in framing the constitution and laws. It also mentioned that the Muslims shall

be enabled to lead their lives in the individual and *collective spheres in accordance with the teachings and requirements of Islam as set out in the Holy Quran and the Sunnah*. Ruled by three As – Allah, America and Army, if liberal democracy did not have much of a chance in Pakistan it is because of the forces that created Pakistan and which were happily and willingly led by Jinnah despite his liberalism.



JINNAH IN INDIA'S HISTORY

A.G. Noorani

The story of Mohammed Ali Jinnah, canonised in Pakistan and demonised in India, has a contemporary relevance. His personality and record are central in any honest inquiry into the causes of Partition.



Mohammed Ali Jinnah in the famous Jinnah House, which Pakistan is now demanding, on Mount Pleasant Road on Malabar Hill in Mumbai.

L.K. ADVANI was by no means the first of the adventurers who tried their skills in self-promotion by holding forth on Mohammed Ali Jinnah, professing to retrieve "the real Jinnah" from the morass of hagiography in Pakistan and demonisation in India. Politicians, journalists and academics of varied hues participated in this sport. Amazingly, there is yet not one comprehensive collection of his writings and speeches from 1906, when he entered public life, till his death in 1948, let alone a definitive biography. If a Pakistan academic, Akbar S. Ahmad, involved in an unsavoury controversy over a film on Jinnah, likened him to Saladin (*sic*), Stanley Wolpert, an American academic, who claimed to have toiled for more than a quarter of a century over his biography, appointed him as "Managing Director of the Tata Enterprises" (*sic*) and hailed

Z.A. Bhutto as a "Sufi mystic". He could not tell M.O. Mathai and John Mathai apart. Jinnah's close friend Kanji Dwarkadas was made a "Parsi" and Sir Abdullah Haroon "a princely ruler" of Khairpur state.

Any biography, to be worth the name, must provide an intelligent explanation for Jinnah's famous speech of August 11, 1947. Wolpert's failure in this test is abject: "What was he talking about? Had he simply forgotten where he was? Had the cyclone of events so disoriented him ?" Disorientation would be too charitable an explanation for Wolpert's comments.

As the Advani episode revived interest in Jinnah, protagonists on both sides entered the lists. On one point Indians and Pakistanis heartily concur. Jinnah was politically born on March 23, 1940, when the Muslim League passed a resolution demanding partition of India on the basis of religion. Neither side is interested in his superb record before that. How does one evaluate a political leader whose later career and credo seem so radically different from those that marked him most of his life, with only a brief twilight period to separate the two? It is unhistoric to read the two completely apart. It is equally wrong to rewrite the record of 1906-1940 because of what ensued thereafter, all the more so if one has not cared to understand the first phase correctly.

Churchill's personality as war leader had shades of the distrusted Churchill of old; but facets of greatness emerged prominently only during the Second World War. Jinnah's secularism is not to be underestimated because he later espoused the poisonous two-nation theory; nor is his culpability, on this score, affected by the creditable record earlier. The crucial question, surely, is whatever led a man of his sterling qualities and unblemished patriotism to advocate India's partition and espouse a theory whose poison spread far and deep? The partition of India must rank in any list of 10 of the greatest tragedies in the history of man. A heavy responsibility devolves on any who brought it about.

The first part of a two-part article

The story of Partition as told by court historians in both countries has a political significance. Bar a very few, Indians and Pakistanis lack the sense of security and pride in objective scholarship. Israel's scholars like Ilan Pappe or scholarly journalists like Tom Segev cheerfully demolish the "patriotic" myths surrounding Israel's establishment. Jinnah symbolises Pakistan. He must be

canonised. A searching look at his mistakes would be unpatriotic. For a corresponding reason, Jinnah must be demonised, lest the wrongs and failings of India's heroes attract closer scrutiny. For opposite reasons Jinnah became a loyalty test in both countries, along with Kashmir and the Partition.

But Jinnah's life has a contemporary relevance. His personality and record are central to any honest inquiry into the causes of India's Partition. Besides, they lie at the core of the discourse about nationalism versus communalism and the distinction between the "nationalist" Muslim and the Sarkari Musalman. Were men like V.D. Savarkar, Jayakar, Madan Mohan Malaviya and Lala Lajpat Rai "nationalist" Hindus or Hindu communalists? Are L.K. Advani and K.S. Sudarshan "nationalist Hindus" or "Hindu nationalists"? As the discourse progressed, schoolboy questions began to be addressed to Muslims exclusively. Indian first or Muslim first? Gamal Abdel Nasser felicitously remarked that he belonged to three concentric circles - *at one and the same time* - Muslim, Arab and African. Contrary to myths in both countries, *Jinnah's nationalism as an Indian and concern for his community, Muslims, formed a seamless web of deep commitment. At no time was he at all unmindful of the one while espousing the cause of the other. They formed an integral whole in an outlook, which is still not appreciated in India today.*

The Aga Khan led a delegation of 35 Muslim leaders to the Viceroy Lord Minto at Shimla on October 1, 1906, to demand separate electorates and much else besides. On October 7, *Gujarati* of Bombay published a letter by a 30-year-old struggling lawyer, Jinnah, asking angrily: "May I know who ever elected the gentlemen who are supposed to represent Bombay... . I know of no meeting of the Mahomedan community that appointed these worthies to represent Bombay." Jinnah attended the 22nd session of the Congress at Calcutta on December 27, 1906, over which Dadabhai Naoroji presided. Jinnah was then his private secretary. A resolution was moved by two Muslim members criticising the Privy Council's ruling that the Wakf-e-Ala-Aulad violated Muslim law. It was a common form of trust created for the settler's progeny. The community was in uproar. Jinnah's remarks in support of the resolution revealed his "public philosophy", to use Lippmann's expression. "It is a matter of gratification to the whole of the Muhammadan community, that we have got on the programme of the Indian National Congress a question which purely affects the Muhammadan community. *That shows one thing, gentlemen, that we Muhammadans can equally stand on this common platform and pray for our grievances being remedied*

through the programme of the National Congress." (Syed Shatifuddin Pirzada: *The Collected Works of Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah; Vol. I, (1906-1921)*, 1984; pages 1 and 2 for the letter and the speech respectively (emphasis added, throughout). Pirzada deserves high credit for the pains he took to acquire a copy of the letter. The series, referred to as *CW*, ended in 1986 with Volume III (1926-1931). Was Jinnah a nationalist in October (on page 1) and a communalist in December (on page 2)?

This was to be his approach for the next 30 years - staunch advocacy of India's freedom and simultaneously espousal of Muslims' grievances without necessarily sharing the Muslim viewpoint. In 1906, the Congress was hospitable and sensible enough to pass the resolution that it did. In later years it was far less so. It was the liberalism of 1906 that made it possible for Jinnah to play the role he did. Elected to the Imperial Legislative Council he successfully piloted a Bill validating the family Wakf in 1913.

Ian Bryant Wells, an Australian scholar, understands that, but not fully. Which is why every setback in Jinnah's pursuit of conciliation drives him to declaim that he then turned to the other plank of his programme. His comments on many a juncture are out of place; but his research is painstaking and extensive. The book is an invaluable addition to the literature on Jinnah. It is not a definitive work even on the phase it covers (1910-1934) but it draws on some archival material hitherto unpublished (*Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity: Jinnah's Early Politics*; Permanent Black; pages 269; Rs.595). Few take this high road to scholarship and consult the record - Jinnah's own utterances in the legislature or public platforms and his writings - instead of spinning familiar theories; namely that he was embittered by his exclusion from Congress, more so after his wife's death, and he disliked mass politics. All are utterly false, as the record shows. It reveals Jinnah as he was. The book's title is derived from the compilation of Jinnah's speeches and writings published in 1918 by Ganesh & Sons, Madras, publishers of nationalist literature. It covered the period between 1912 and 1917 and bore the title *Mohamed Ali Jinnah; An Ambassador of Unity*, with a biographical appreciation by Sarojini Naidu. She called him a "cross-bencher". In his foreword, the Raja of Mahmudabad, Mohamed Ali Mohamed, endorsed the sobriquet of "Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity".

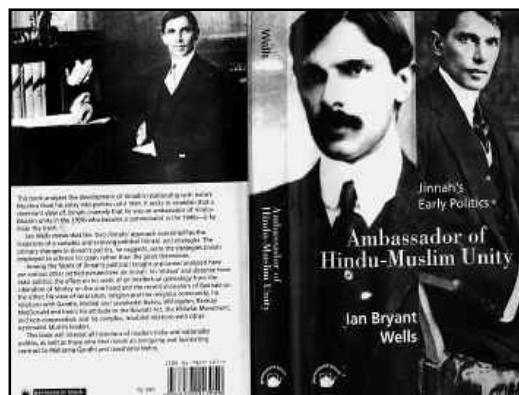
Sarojini Naidu began by quoting Jinnah's confession "in a priceless moment of self-revelation". He had said: "It is my ambition to

become the Muslim Gokhale." Even after he had become the Quaid-e-Azam and advocate of Pakistan, Jinnah praised Gopal Krishna Gokhale's liberal and broad-minded statesmanship in his presidential address at the Muslim League's 30th session in Delhi on April 24, 1943, and said "he [Gokhale] was a tower of intellect". Sarojini Naidu proceeded to quote Gokhale on Jinnah: "He has true stuff in him and that freedom from all sectarian prejudice which will make him the best ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity."

An ambassador can perform his role only when he enjoys the confidence of both sides. Throughout his career, Jinnah rose above communal feeling and tried "to combine Hindus and Muslims in one harmonious union for the common good" (December 20, 1913). That is how he brought about the pact between the Congress and the League in Lucknow in 1916. Wells writes: "As a Muslim with a demonstrated record of concern for the Muslim community, he was in a position to pressure the Muslims to reduce their demands without being seen as a Congress lackey. As a noted nationalist and a colleague of Gokhale, he was similarly able to persuade the Hindus to make concessions to the Muslims without being labelled a communalist."

To the League session in 1923 Jinnah said: "India will get Dominion Responsible government the day the Hindus and Muhammedans are united. Swaraj is an almost interminable term with Hindu-Muslim unity." This ambassador fiercely guarded his independence and integrity. At the Congress session on August 28, 1900, he *supported* a resolution deprecating separate electorates in local bodies. But, he added: "I wish it to be made quite clear that I do not represent the Muhammedan community here nor have I any mandate from the Muhammedan community. I only express my

personal views here and nothing more" (CW, Vol. I, page17).



In a manner of his own, he stood above both communities. At the Lucknow session he said: "Whatever my individual opinion may be, I am here to interpret and express the sense of the overwhelming body of Muslim opinion, of which the All-India Muslim League is the political organ." He inwardly loathed separate communal electorates. But

like Gokhale and Bal Gangadhar Tilak, he realised that Muslims wanted them, and "a minority must, above everything else, have a complete sense of security before its broader political sense can be evoked for cooperation and united endeavour in the national tasks" (Ganesh; page 46). In November 1917, he said at a public meeting in Shantaram Chawl: "My message to the Musalmans is to join hands with your Hindu brethren. My message to the Hindus is to lift your backward brother up" (*ibid*; page 155).

By then he had joined the Muslim League but on a condition which Sarojini Naidu recorded: "Loyalty to the Muslim League and the Muslim interest would in no way and at no time imply even the shadow of disloyalty to the larger national cause to which his life was dedicated" (Ganesh; page 11).

Elected to the Imperial Legislative Council in 1909 he got entangled in a row with its President, the Viceroy, when he attacked South Africa for "the harsh and cruel treatment that is meted out to Indians". Lord Minto called him to order. "Cruelty" was too strong a word to use for "a friendly part of the Empire". Jinnah's retort was characteristic: "Well My Lord, I should feel inclined to use much stronger language." He did not wish to break the rules and repeated his censure dropping the word "cruelty". South Africa's behaviour "is the harshest which can possibly be imagined".

In the clime of 1917 he ridiculed fears of "brute" and "permanent" communal majority, which possessed him in 1939. Few care to ask why. Fewer still care to ask why the Gandhi-Nehru leadership deviated from the path set by Gokhale and Tilak. Jinnah's speech is relevant still: "It is said that we are going on at a tremendous speed, that we are in a minority and the government of this country might afterwards become a Hindu government . . . I particularly wish to address my Mahomedan friends on this point. Do you think, in the first instance, as to whether it is possible that the government of this country could become a Hindu government? Do you think that government could be conducted by ballot boxes? Do you think that because the Hindus are in the majority, therefore they could carry on a measure, in the Legislative Assembly, and there is an end of it? If seventy millions of Mussalmans do not approve of a measure, which is carried by a ballot box, do you think that it could be enforced and administered in this country? Do you think that the Hindu statesmen, with their intellect, with their past history, would ever think of - when they get self-government - enforcing a measure by a ballot box? . . . This is a bogey that is put before you by your enemies to frighten you, to

scare you away from the cooperation with the Hindus, which is essential for the establishment of self-government.

"If this country is not to be governed by the Hindus, let me tell you in the same spirit, it was not to be governed by the Mahomedans either and certainly not by the English. It is to be governed by the people and the sons of this country, and I, standing here - I believe that I am voicing the feeling of the whole of India - say that what we demand is the immediate transfer of the substantial power of government of this country and that is the principal demand of our scheme of reform. Do not our opponents understand this? Are they so dull? Are they so foolish? Do they not understand this demand? Our demand is this: 'You have monopoly in this country in the government of this country. You have monopoly in this country in the Army. You have monopoly in the commerce of this country. We are not going to submit to any of these three monopolies. You have enjoyed them for the last 150 years, but we are tired of it.'" This was his message to the Muslim League in 1917.

Ayesha Jalal demonstrates in her work *The Sole Spokesman* that Jinnah was by no means too assured of his hold on his Muslim followers, especially the arch provincialists. He was ever the mediator. At the All-Parties' Convention in December 1928, which rejected his proposals (on the Nehru Report), he plaintively pleaded: "What we want is that the Hindus and Mussalmans should march together until our object is obtained. Therefore, it is essential that you must get not only the Muslim League but the Mussalmans of India and here I am not speaking as a Mussalman but as an Indian and it is my desire to see that we get seven crores of Mussalmans to march along with *us* in the struggle for freedom. Would you be content with a few? Would you be content if I were to say 'I am with you'? Do you want or do you not want Muslim India to go along with you?"

In her neglected classic *Forfeited Future*, Marguerite Dove noted the language he used in 1934: "Can we completely assure Muslims that the safeguards to which they attach vital importance will be embodied in the future Constitution of India?". She remarked that it is "indicative of Jinnah's conception of himself as an arbiter... not wedded to the Muslim viewpoint" (Chanakya Publications, 1987; page 398). Indeed, in his speech of August 11, 1947, he said "even as regards Muslims you have Pathans, Punjabis ...".

But the schoolboy tests caught up even with a man with his background. He said on in September, 1931: "I am an Indian first and a Muslim afterwards and I agree that *no Indian can ever save*

"his country if he neglects the interests of Muslims because it is by encouraging them that you will be able to serve your country" (*Bombay Chronicle*, September 15, 1931).

This is the difference between the truly nationalist Muslim and the Sarkari Musalman, the classic Uncle Tom. M.C. Chagla was secretary of the League till the late 1920s when he broke with Jinnah - professionally as his junior and in politics. Not only did he turn his back on Muslims completely but he denounced them when he was High Commissioner to the United Kingdom in *The Times* (London), January 26, 1962. An Indian envoy stationed abroad writes to the press of the host country to inform the people there about the situation in his own country presenting it in a favourable light; not to denounce to them a section of his own nation. He complained to President Radhakrishnan that secularism would be compromised if Dr. Zakir Hussain became President (S. Gopal; *Radhakrishnan*; page 358). Zakir Hussain had stood steadfastly for the values of nationalism and secularism and chose a life of privation as educationist. Chagla became a High Court Judge during the Raj and ruled in favour of the British in a celebrated *habeas corpus* case in 1942. He would, of course, have had no complaint if he were made President. An ancillary line he took in politics was to denounce Pakistan ceaselessly.

In 1930, only a year before Jinnah spoke thus, he said as he left for London to attend the Round Table Conference: "I can only say to *my people* that I shall hold India's interests as sacred and that nothing will come in my way of doing my duty to my country." (*The Tribune*; October 4, 1930).

He had left the Congress, but not Indian nationalism. But as the Congress tried to enlist Muslims who would toe its line, Jinnah warned the League in October 1937 that the Muslims were "divided ... there is a group that stands with face turned towards the British" and another that was pro-Congress. "The worst toady on earth, the most wicked communalist today amongst Muslims - when he surrenders unconditionally to the Congress and abuses his own community - becomes the nationalist of nationalists tomorrow. These terms and words are intended to create an inferiority complex amongst the Musalmans and to demoralise them. (*Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah*; edited by Jamiluddin Ahmad; Vol. I page 31).

Where did he stand? He said on September 28, 1939: "Some people have a dictionary of their own, but within the honest meaning of the term I still remain a nationalist" (*ibid*, page 86).

The commitment to Indian nationalism now survived on borrowed time. It was soon abandoned.

WHATEVER happened to make the "Ambassador of Unity", the mediator between two communities, the advocate of one of them and a very strident one at that? He had espoused redress of Muslims' grievances even while he functioned as mediator. The record, quoted above, reveals the spirit in which he acted throughout. Fanciful theories came to be advanced for the change by those who had no patience with the record.

Three constants must be remembered. First, religion and politics must be kept apart. Wells writes: "Jinnah opposed the inherently religious nature of Gandhi's programme. Gandhi had won over the Muslims by embracing the cause of the Khilafat, while within the Congress his call was characteristically Hindu. Jinnah strongly resisted the introduction of religion into politics." He said in the Central Legislative Assembly in 1925: "For God's sake do not import the discussion of communal matters into this House." In the same forum he said on February 7, 1935: "Religion should not be allowed to come into politics. Religion is merely a matter between man and God." Safeguards for the minorities "is a political issue". Differences between Hindus and Muslims were "a national problem and not a communal dispute", he wrote to Chagla on August 5, 1929. On February 1, 1943, the advocate of Pakistan repeated: "religion ... is strictly a matter between God and man" (Ahmad; Vol. 1, pages 5 and 469).

Another constant was the individual conscience in public life. Jinnah was for social reform, including reform of personal laws, when opinion in both communities was against it. In 1912, he supported Bhupendra Basu's Special Marriage Bill: "The position of a representative in the Council, be he Hindu or Muhammadan, is awkward because the orthodox opinion is against it (the Bill), but that, I submit, is no reason for a representative who owes a duty to his people to refrain from expressing his conviction fearlessly. It does not necessarily follow that because a majority are against it, they are right. If a representative in this Council is convinced in his mind that this is a measure which is a good for his country and his people, he ought to support it."

During the 1926 elections, he told his electors: "I am your representative so long as I represent you. Your interests are mine but under no circumstances shall I ever place them above my conscience," adding: "The moment I find I cannot carry out your mandate without derogation to my conscience, I shall ask you to

replace me." Supporting the Hindu Child Marriage Bill in the Assembly on September 11, 1929, he censured Muslims who opposed the Bill. But honest as ever, he admitted "my constituency has not given me any mandate whatsoever".

The last constant was commitment to education *and, with it, to mass politics* in order to raise popular awareness. A man who could address meetings with Tilak in Shantaram Chawl and invite assault by the police in the Town Hall during the agitation against Governor Willingdon was no elitist. He wanted to "reach the masses", he said in 1917.

Jinnah upbraided the government severely on Gokhale's Elementary Education Bill. "We should do all this to improve the masses of this country to whom you owe a much greater duty than to anybody else. My answer is that you must remove that reproach that is levelled justly against British rule, namely, the neglect of elementary education. My answer is that it is the duty of every civilised government to educate masses, and if you have to face unpopularity, if you have to face a certain amount of danger, face it boldly in the name of duty.... .

"Then it is said, 'Oh! but the people will become too big for their boots', if I may use that expression, that 'they will not follow the occupations of their parents, they will demand more rights, there will be more strikes, they will become socialists'. Well, Sir, *are you going to keep millions and millions of people under your feet for fear that they may demand more rights?* are you going to keep them in ignorance and darkness forever and for all ages to come *because they might stand up against you and say we have certain rights and you must give them to us?* Is that the feeling of humanity? Is that the spirit of humanity? I say, Sir, that it is the duty of zamindars and of the landlords to be a little less selfish. I say, Sir, that *it is the duty of the educated classes to be a little less selfish. They must not monopolise the pedestals, but they must be prepared to meet their people. They must be brought down from their pedestals if they do not do their duties properly.* I say, Sir, that it is the elementary right of every man to say, if he is wronged, that he is wronged and he should be righted."

And now, read Jawaharlal Nehru's comments in his *Autobiography*: "The enthusiasm of the people outside struck him as mob hysteria. There is as much difference between him and the Indian masses as between Savile Row and Bond Street and the Indian village with its mud huts. He suggested once privately that only matriculates should be taken into the Congress ... [this] was in

harmony with his general outlook." This was a malicious falsehood written of a Jinnah who censured the government in 1925. "I say it is the greatest stigma on the government of any country in the world to show that after your 150 years of rule, as is the case in this country, you have not given knowledge and light, nay even the three R's, no more than 6 to 7 per cent of the population of this country. Is that going to be your policy? Is that the way you are going to advance India constitutionally and make her fit for self-government and for self-defence?" Jinnah once proposed a joint Congress-League Committee to draw up "a practical programme for the organisation of workers and peasants" (*Foundations of Pakistan*; edited by S.S. Pirzada; Vol. I, page 582).

One writes "malicious" advisedly, because even at the height of Jinnah's reputation as a secularist Nehru wrote to K.T. Shah on July 12, 1929: "I find there is not very much in common between him and me so far as our outlooks are concerned." Nehru's later comments on Jinnah reveal that his feelings about Jinnah were almost visceral. In 1942 and 1946 he said that Jinnah had no place in the country!

Contrary to common impression, Jinnah was a central figure in Indian politics since at least 1916, if not earlier. The nationalist daily *Bombay Chronicle* wrote of him on October 27, 1928: "Mr. Jinnah's position in Indian politics is indeed, very unique. Standing as he does *in the rank of the greatest politicians of the day*, as president of the All-India Muslim League and as a trusted friend of Hindus, Mr. Jinnah exercises a great influence over his countrymen."

On April 28, 1928, Motilal Nehru wrote to Purshottam Thakurdas, "I can think of no other responsible Muslim to take his place", while Jinnah was abroad. In the aftermath of the agitation against Willingdon, K.M. Munshi spoke at a meeting on December 11, 1918, and referred to Jinnah as one "the like of whom he had never seen before" (*Bombay Chronicle*, December 12, 1918). It became fashionable to paint him as one who "arrived" at the centre of politics only after 1940.

The British hated this "Bolshevik", as Willingdon called him in 1918. A proposal to deport Jinnah to Burma was mooted twice, by Willingdon and his successor George Lloyd. Jinnah attacked Britain's economic exploitation of India. The Home Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, H. Haig, called him "the arch enemy of the British Raj". Jinnah constantly took a principled stand on terrorism. He denounced the crime but pleaded for redress of the

wrongs that drove people to it. He told the Viceroy on September 23, 1918: "It was said by the Honourable Home Member that these are not political matters, but crimes. With the utmost respect, I beg to differ from him. These are political matters and very much so. You must remember that in India before 1906 there was no such thing as criminal conspiracies of revolutionary characters . . . The cause of this, My Lord, is that there is discontent, there is dissatisfaction, there is unrest. Might I say, My Lord, that it is partly, if not wholly due to your policy "

On September 16, 1924, he asked: "Why do these educated young men, bright youths who have drunk at your own literature and who have imbibed those principles of liberty and freedom, come together in secret organisations in order to assassinate you, the very people who have taught those fine principles? Why? Because they feel that this government do not respond to their aspirations, to their ideals and to their ambition to secure complete political freedom for their country . . . Sir, can you point me out a single country in the world . . . that claims the name of a civilised government, which has got a statute of this kind because there are a few bombs thrown. Which country is free, where bombs are not thrown? Is this the way you are going to prevent bombs being thrown? No. The way to prevent bombs being thrown is to meet the people, to respond to their feelings, their sentiments and their legitimate and proper aspirations I say that it is opposed to every principle of the Constitution that in normal times the Executive should have such a power. Even if the Executive were responsible to the Legislature I should be the last person to give this power. Why have at all any judicial tribunals in this country? Why not leave everything to the Executive? The very object, the very fundamental principle of law which says that no man's property or life is to be taken away without a judicial trial and without giving him the right to defend himself you take away by this Act." He resigned from the Legislative Council in protest against the Rowlatt Act in a stinging letter to the Viceroy. He consistently opposed preventive detention.



www.sacw.net | February 6, 2005

REWRITING THE HISTORY OF PAKISTAN

by Pervez Amirali Hoodbhoy and Abdul Hameed Nayyar

[Source: *Islam, Politics and the State: The Pakistan Experience*, Asghar Khan (ed.) Zed Books, London, 1985, pp. 164-177.]

From indoctrination's foul rope
Suspend all reason, all hope
Until with swollen tongue
Morality herself is hung.

Introduction

Education in Pakistan, from schools to universities, is being fundamentally redefined. This development is expected to have profound implications for the future of the country's society and politics. Most changes are traceable to factors related to the stability of the present government, but there are also others which cannot be analysed as a mere response to immediate threats. A new concept of education now prevails, the full impact of which will probably be felt by the turn of the century, when the present generation of school children attains maturity.

Having pledged to divorce education from liberal and secular ideals, Pakistani rulers view education as an important means of creating an Islamised society and as an instrument for forging a new national identity based on the 'Ideology of Pakistan'. Important steps have already been taken in this direction: enforcement of *chadar* in educational institutions; organisation of congregational *zuhra* (afternoon) prayers during school hours; compulsory teaching of Arabic as a second language from sixth class onwards; introduction of *nazara* Qur'an (reading of Qur'an) as a matriculation requirement; alteration of the definition of literacy to include religious knowledge; elevation of *maktab* schools to the status of regular schools and the recognition of *maktab* certificates as being equivalent to master's degrees; creation of an Islamic university in Islamabad; introduction of religious knowledge as a criterion for selecting teachers of all categories and all levels; and the revision of conventional subjects to emphasise Islamic values.

It is not the intent of this chapter to analyse in its totality the restructuring of education under the present martial law regime. We focus, instead, on a relatively narrow area - the revised history of Pakistan as currently taught to college students at the intermediate and degree levels. To this end, all officially prescribed Pakistan studies textbooks have, been examined, together with books recommended at different institutions. In addition, material has also been included from a number of other books dealing with the history of Pakistan which were written after 1977 and which have discernible official approval. We have discovered that, apart from relatively minor variations in emphasis and style, all present-day textbooks are essentially identical in content. Thus this chapter accurately represents the currently taught version of Pakistani history.

The task of rewriting history books started in earnest in 1981, when General Zia ul Haq declared compulsory the teaching of Pakistan studies to all degree students, including those at engineering and medical colleges. Shortly thereafter, the University Grants Commission issued a directive to prospective textbook authors specifying that the objective of the new course is to 'induce pride for the nation's past, enthusiasm for the present, and unshakeable faith in the stability and longevity of Pakistan' [1]. To eliminate possible ambiguities of approach, authors were given the following directives:

To demonstrate that the basis of Pakistan is not to be founded in racial, linguistic, or geographical factors, but, rather, in the shared experience of a common religion. To get students to know and appreciate the Ideology of Pakistan, and to popularize it with slogans. To guide students towards the ultimate goal of Pakistan - the creation of a completely Islamised State. [2]

In fulfillment of this directive, modern texts of Pakistani history are centred around the following themes:

1. The 'Ideology of Pakistan', both as a historical force which motivated the movement for Pakistan as well as its *raison d'être*
2. The depiction of Jinnah as a man of orthodox religious views who sought the creation of a theocratic state
3. A move to establish the *ulama* as genuine heroes of the Pakistan Movement

4. An emphasis on ritualistic Islam, together with a rejection of liberal interpretations of the religion and generation of communal antagonism

In the remainder of this chapter, each of the above has been examined in turn.

Genesis of the 'Ideology of Pakistan'

The 'Ideology of Pakistan' occupies a position of central importance in all post-1977 Pakistani history textbooks. This ubiquitous phrase permeates all discussion, serves as the reference point for all debate, and makes its appearance at the very outset in all textbooks: 'As citizens of an, ideological state— it is necessary to first know the basis upon which Pakistan was founded, the ideology of Pakistan.' [3] A virtually identical beginning is found in another book: 'Pakistan is an ideological state—the Ideology of Pakistan was the inspiration and the basis of the Movement for Pakistan.' [4] General Zia ul Haq considers the 'Ideology of Pakistan' to be of crucial importance. In one of his speeches he stressed that 'the armed forces bear the sacred responsibility for safeguarding Pakistan's ideological frontiers'. [5]

The 'Ideology of Pakistan' is defined in a number of ways. For example, one source states that 'the Ideology of Pakistan is Islam'.[6] In another textbook, the 'Ideology of Pakistan' is more explicitly defined as:

... that guiding principle which has been accepted by the Muslims of the majority regions of the South Asian subcontinent and which allows them to lead their lives individually and collectively, according to the principles of Islam. [7]

The above definitions do not limit the 'Ideology of Pakistan' to the boundaries of Pakistan. All Muslim majority areas of the subcontinent, including Bangladesh, are covered. Moreover, the manner in which Muslims ought to lead their collective lives in the modern world is assumed to be well defined and beyond controversy. The underlying belief is that there exists a unique definition of an Islamic state.

In stark contrast to modern textbooks, no textbook written prior to 1977 contains mention of the 'Ideology of Pakistan'. Indeed, this phrase was not a part of the political parlance then. Although its precise genealogy is hard to ascertain, ex-Chief Justice

Mohammad Munir claims that it has relatively recent origins. In his monograph *From Jinnah to Zia* he writes:

The Quaid-i-Azam never used the words 'Ideology of Pakistan' Ô For fifteen years after the establishment of Pakistan, the Ideology of Pakistan was not known to anybody until in 1962 a solitary member of the *Jamaat-i-Islami* used these words for the first time when the Political Parties Bill was being discussed. On this, Chaudhry Fazal Elahi, who has recently retired as President of Pakistan, rose from his seat and objected that the 'Ideology of Pakistan' shall have to be defined. The member who had proposed the original amendment replied that the 'Ideology of Pakistan was Islam', but nobody asked him the further question 'What is Islam?' The amendment to the bill was therefore passed. [8]

While this event may or may not be the first significant use of the term 'Ideology of Pakistan', it does hint at the involvement of the politico-religious party, the *Jamaat-i-Islami*, in the propagation - and perhaps creation - of the phrase in question. Therefore, with the aim of arriving at a better understanding of this important phrase, we turn to a brief discussion of the *Jamaat* and its political programme.

Founded by the late Maulana Abul Ala Maudoodi, the *Jamaat-i-Islami* is a fundamentalist party which categorically asserts the superiority of the Islamic *Shariah* over all other principles and forms of political and social organisation. Much of the *Jamaat*'s appeal derives from rhetorical denunciation of Western civilisation and Western democracy. It has also evolved a version of an Islamic state - the same view currently being popularised by modern textbooks in Pakistan.

The *Jamaat*'s view of an Islamic state is that of an Islamic theocratic state - a state governed according to divinely revealed principles wherein the head of state, elected or otherwise, interprets such principles and translates them into practical matters of the state. Although Maudoodi, in his *Islamic Law and Constitution*, states that 'Islam vests all the Muslim citizens of an Islamic state with popular vice-gerency', he is quick to point out that all vice-gerents need not be of equal consequence. He demands that constitution makers: evolve such a system of elections as would ensure the appointment of only those who are trustworthy and piousÔ They should also devise effective measures to defeat the designs and machinations of those who scramble for posts of trust and are consequently hated and cursed

by the people in spite of their so-called 'victories' in the elections.
[9]

In this 'state without borders' any Muslim anywhere can be a citizen. It will be the best governed not only because its leaders are pious but also because only those will vote who are themselves pious.

With characteristic sternness, the *Manifesto of the Jamaat-i-Islami* (formulated in January 1951, reapproved by its *Majlis-i-Shoora* in December 1969) requires all political activity in Pakistan to obey the following code of ethics (note occurrence of 'Ideology of Pakistan' below):

Nobody should indulge in anything repugnant to the *Ideology of Pakistan* [emphasis added] — Any effort directed towards turning this country into a secular state or implanting herein any foreign ideology amounts to an attack on the very existence of Pakistan.

Notwithstanding occasional sparring, there exists a confluence of basic interests and perceptions of the *Jamaat* and Pakistani rulers. It is highly significant that, with no essential change in meaning, the phrase 'Ideology of Pakistan' has been elevated from the relative obscurity of the *Manifesto of the Jamaat-i-Islami* into legally unchallengeable national dogma.

Religious Ideology and the Movement for Pakistan

Independent of precisely when and where the phrase 'Ideology of Pakistan' was first used, it is incontrovertibly true that its common use, both by national leaders and in textbooks, is a post-1977 development. In contrast, the 'Two-Nation Theory' - the basis of Pakistan - has genuine historical roots almost a century old. It was Mohammad Ali Jinnah who, for the first time, proclaimed that India was inhabited by two distinct nations - Hindus and Muslims - who could not live together in one state. In his presidential address to the Muslim League session at Lahore in 1940, he argued that 'Hindus and Muslims belong to two different religions, philosophies, social customs, literatures'.[10] Jinnah expounded his views with such eloquence and force that most Muslims, and even some Hindus, came to believe in them. The Muslim League demand for Pakistan was rooted in this theory, and India was eventually partitioned on the premise that Muslims constitute a distinct entity. Modern textbooks state that this Two-Nation Theory was the predecessor of the 'Ideology of Pakistan'.

This righteous demand (for a separate homeland) was given the temporary name of 'Two-Nation Theory'. Now that right has been achieved, the same theory in this land is called the Ideology of Pakistan. [11]

In post-1977 Pakistan, the 'Ideology of Pakistan' is invariably equated to the 'Two-Nation Theory'. This raises the following questions: prior to 1947, what was the new state envisaged to be? In what sense, and to what extent, was the demand for a theocratic Islamic state the driving force behind the movement for Pakistan? We now turn to a consideration of these questions.

From all historical accounts it appears that in the heat of the struggle for Pakistan the structure of the new state - theocratic, democratic, or whatever - received no serious thought. Although they made their case on the assumption of a distinct Islamic identity, the Muslim League leadership was generally liberal in religious matters, and there had been no sudden revival of faith among them. For Jinnah the matter was particularly clear: he wanted a homeland for the Muslims, not an Islamic state. But there was a definite conflict between this secular constitutional way of thinking and that of the more religious young Muslim Leaguers, who had responded wholeheartedly to the League's call. There was, in fact, a long difference of opinion between Jinnah and the Raja of Mahmudabad, the youngest member of the League's working committee.

Because it throws into sharp focus the issues of the times, it is extremely instructive to study the Raja's memoirs, particularly with reference to the difference in opinion between Jinnah and himself on the nature of the future state:

I was one of the founder members of the Islamic *Jamaat*. We advocated that Pakistan should be an Islamic state. I must confess that I was very enthusiastic about it and in my speeches I constantly propagated my ideas. My advocacy of an Islamic state brought me into conflict with Jinnah. He thoroughly disapproved of my ideas and dissuaded me from expressing them publicly from the League platform lest the people might be led to believe that Jinnah shared my view and that he was asking me to convey such ideas to the public. As I was convinced that I was right and did not want to compromise Jinnah's position, I decided to cut myself away and for nearly two years kept my distance from him, apart from seeing him during working committee meetings and other formal occasions. It was not easy to take this decision as my

associations with Jinnah had been very close in the past. Now that I look back I realize how wrong I had been. [12]

According to the Raja - and this is also a view shared by many scholars - three principal factors, in descending order of priority, transformed the Muslim League from the position of a feeble political minority in 1937 into a great mass movement less than a decade later:

One was the Congress attitude of indifference and, at times, hostility. Another was the leadership which, under Jinnah, broke new ground and fashioned new political strategy. Still another was the part played by religious appeal in the heightening of this consciousness. The leadership at the top was generally secular-minded and trained in modern political methods, but on the lower levels and especially among the field workers propaganda on religious lines was the general practice. [13]

To understand correctly Jinnah's concept of Pakistan, it is necessary to examine his position in greater detail.

Jinnah's Mind: Secular or Communal?

It is frequently said that without Jinnah there would have been no Pakistan, and Jinnah is himself known to have remarked that it was he, with the help of his secretary and typewriter, who won Pakistan for the Muslims.[14] Irrespective of the extent to which this is true, it is certainly the case that Jinnah is revered in Pakistan to an extent which no other political personality approaches even remotely. His speeches and writings, therefore, often serve as a reference point for debates on the nature of the Pakistani state and its future.

Modern textbooks invariably portray Jinnah as the architect of an Islamic ideological state:

The All-India Muslim League, and even the Quaid-i-Azam himself, said in the clearest possible terms that Pakistan would be an ideological state, the basis of whose laws would be the Quran and *Sunnah*, and whose ultimate destiny would be to provide a society in which Muslims could individually and collectively live according to the laws of Islam. [15]

Paradoxically, Jinnah began his political career as an exponent of Hindu-Muslim unity and as the leader of the liberal left wing of the Congress. His efforts culminated in the Lucknow Pact of 1916

between the Congress and the League. But when he again led the League almost twenty years later, the call was no longer for unity but for Hindu-Muslim separation. Khalid bin Sayeed, one of his more respected biographers, gives convincing evidence that in the period 1929-1935 the Congress' intransigence was a major factor that changed him from an 'idealist' into a 'realist' who saw no future for Muslims in a united India. [16]

In his personal life, Jinnah was liberal and Westernised. Overcoming the taboos of cross-communal relations, he married a Parsi lady in the face of her parents' opposition - a marriage destined to end in tragic separation and the premature death of his wife. Jinnah maintained his inner secularism even in the seething cauldron of communal hatred following Partition, as is evident from the fact that he appointed Joginder Nath Mandal, a Hindu, to serve in Pakistan's first cabinet. His famous 11 August 1947 speech before the nation is the clearest possible exposition of a secular state in which religion and state are separate from each other:

We are starting with the fundamental principle that we are all citizens and equal citizens of one State. . . Now I think that we should keep that in front of us as our ideal, and you will find that in due course of time Hindus would cease to be Hindus and Muslims would cease to be Muslims, not in the religious sense, because that is the personal faith of each individual but in the political sense as citizens of the state. Ö You may belong to any religion or caste or creed - that has nothing to do with the business of the State.[17]

In an interview to Doon Campbell, Reuter's correspondent in New Delhi in 1946, Jinnah made it perfectly clear that it was Western-style democracy that he wanted for Pakistan:

The new state would be a modern democratic state with sovereignty resting in the people and the members of the new nation having equal rights of citizenship regardless of their religion, caste or creed. [18]

Note the highly significant phrase 'sovereignty resting in the people'. In contrast, in Maulana Maudoodi's Islamic state, 'sovereignty rests with Allah'. Thus, Jinnah rejects the basis for a theocratic state. This is stated even more explicitly in his 1946 speech before the Muslim League convention in Delhi: 'What are we fighting for? What are we aiming at? It is not theocracy, nor a theocratic state.' [19] The historian K.K. Aziz has remarked that

'on the record of their writings and speeches, Jinnah comes out to be far more liberal and secular than Gandhi'. [20]

All of Jinnah's speeches were not so unequivocal about the nature of the future state. In the 1945 elections, the Muslim League was aided by a number of influential *ulama*. It is in this period that we find in Jinnah's speeches the greatest number of references to Islam and society. For example, in November 1945 he said that 'Muslims are demanding Pakistan so that they may live according to their code of life and traditions, and so that they may govern themselves according to the rules of Islam'. [21] How does one interpret this speech of Jinnah's, together with others of essentially similar nature, with the outright secular declarations quoted earlier? At least two interesting possibilities suggest themselves.

Jinnah may have made a compromise with the *ulama* in the interest of achieving unity on the primary goal - the attainment of a homeland for the Muslims. On the other hand, it is possible that he saw Islam in such liberal terms that he saw no essential conflict between it and his desire for a modern, democratic state along Western lines. Here one might add that Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, a venerated religious authority whose understanding of the Quran was no less deep than that of his contemporary, Maulana Abul Ala Maudoodi, nevertheless interpreted the political message of Islam in a totally different way from the latter. It is evident that Jinnah also did not accept the fundamentalist interpretation of Islam and the Islamic state.

The Role of the Religious Parties

All history bears evidence that religion has been a powerful nexus between individuals and groups, a potent instrument which has often welded a heterogeneous group into a distinct nationality. Through appeal to supernatural authority, religion promotes national unity as a divine command. When coupled with appropriate social and economic forces, it can forge a powerful and irresistible nationalism. Contemporary history is replete with examples: the Greek church as a source for Greek nationalism, the Catholic church as a factor in Irish separatism, Judaism and the state of Israel, Islam and Pakistan.

Since the movement for Pakistan was rooted in the social, cultural, and religious distinctions between Muslims and Hindus, one might logically expect that Muslim religious parties would have played a major, if not a leading, role in mobilising the Muslim masses. Paradoxically, aside from exceptions of no great importance, these

parties had bitterly opposed Jinnah and the demand for Pakistan. Indeed, the exponents of Muslim nationalism were forced to battle on three formidable fronts. First, they had to persuade the British of their separate identity. Second, it was necessary to convince Congress of their determination to live as two separate nations. And third, the efforts of the *ulama*, who opposed Pakistan on grounds that nationalism was antithetical to Islam, had to be nullified.

The pre-Partition position of the politico-religious parties on the Pakistan question contrasts oddly with their present enthusiasm for religious nationalism. Maulana Maudoodi and the *Jamaat-i-Islami* had rejected nationalism because it 'led to selfishness, prejudice, and pride'. Till 1947 Maudoodi maintained that he would not fight for Pakistan, that he did not believe in Pakistan, and that the demand for it was un-Islamic. Some ten years before Partition he had maintained that 'Muslim nationalism is as contradictory a term as "chaste prostitute" '. [22] *Jamaat* literature would sometimes use the derogatory word *Na-Pakistan* for the proposed state. There were frequent indictments of Jinnah as lacking 'an Islamic mentality or Islamic habits of thoughts'. [23]

The *Jamaat-i-Islami* was not alone in its opposition to Pakistan. The *Majlis-i-Ahrar*, another politico-religious party, took a similar position. However, unlike the *Jamaat*, it was aligned with the Congress. *Ahrar* leaders termed Jinnah the *Kafir-i-Azam* (the great infidel) as a rebuttal to the title *Quaid-i-Azam* (the great leader) conferred upon him by the Muslim League. Allama Mashriqi's *Khaksar* party went a step further and once sought to assassinate Jinnah, albeit unsuccessfully. Significantly, *Jamaat-i-Islami*, *Jamiat-ul-ulama-i-Hind*, *Majlis-i-Ahrar*, and *Khaksar* were absent at Jinnah's funeral. A rather curious situation arose after Pakistan became a reality in 1947 since most political-religious parties were confronted with the dilemma of being in a country whose creation they had opposed. Political expediency caused many leaders to abruptly volte-face. For example, Mian Tufail Mohammad, now *amir* of the *Jamaat-i-Islami*, who had once denounced as 'sinners' all those who supported or joined Jinnah's government, stated on television recently that, in fact, there had existed an understanding between Jinnah and the *Jamaat* that both would work separately towards the same goal. It has also become usual for many modern textbooks to refer to Maudoodi as one of the intellectual founders of the Pakistan Movement. This startling fact suggests that the influence of the *Jamaat-i-Islami* on national education may be deeper than is normally assumed.

Those politico-religious parties which had resisted the creation of Pakistan may well have made good the political damage. Their allegiance to an Islamic state now entitles them to rewards which go beyond mere forgiveness: 'the services rendered by the *ulama* and *mashaikh* to the cause of the Pakistan Movement are worthy of writing in golden letters'. [24] One textbook devotes an entire chapter to their role, claiming that 'when Allama Iqbal and the Quaid-i-Azam presented their programme for an Islamic state, it met with the enthusiastic support of the *ulama* and *mashaikh*'. [25]

1947 -77: The Gulf of Silence

Nations which can rationally analyse their past, and particularly their defeats and periods of collective suffering, are far more likely to survive and prosper than those in which absence of free expression forbids truthful self-examination. Japan and Germany after World War II, Argentina after the Falklands War - historical examples abound in which positive shifts in national policy, domestic and foreign, occurred as a result of decisive defeat. Indeed, there were expectations of a critical assessment of the role of elites and readjustment of regional policies within Pakistan following the 1971 civil war and the subsequent Indian invasion. In this war, tens of thousands died, millions were displaced, and the country was rent asunder. Thirteen years later, this optimism has proven to be unfounded.

From the year 1947, the establishment of Pakistan, through the year 1977, the start of the *Nizam-i-Mustafa* Movement, all recent Pakistan studies texts maintain total, or almost total, silence on political events of this period. The most detailed account of history until 1968 to be found in any of these books is reproduced in full here: 'In October 1958, General Ayub Khan imposed martial law and thus saved the country from chaos'. [26] Of the few books which mention the Bangladesh episode, one has the following to say:

As a result of the 1970 elections, the political differences between East and West Pakistan grew and led to their separation. The cause of Islamic unity received a setback, but one should not interpret this as a rejection of Islamic Ideology by the people. Indeed, unless Islam is presented as a whole, and not as just worship and prayers, it remains incomplete. The forces of atheism and worldliness, in this case, can influence the minds of people through modern education and public media. [27]

This strict economy of words is in striking contrast to the extensive coverage given to Islamisation after 1977. Nevertheless, this small paragraph invites more than just cursory reading.

There is little doubt that the painful separation of Bangladesh from Pakistan strikes at the very roots of Pan-Islamism - the belief that Muslims all over the world belong to one nation and that differences among them are insignificant. Modern textbooks, therefore, are reluctant to discuss the issue in any detail. It should also be observed that the above quoted paragraph attributes the separation of East and West squarely to the fact that elections were held in Pakistan. This serves to create the fear that if elections and democracy broke up Pakistan in 1971, then Pakistan may again be mortally endangered if elections and democracy are restored at some point in the future. Finally, note that the last lines of the paragraph implicitly acknowledge the lack of success of the Islamic parties in the 1970 elections. However, students are instructed to disregard this because 'modern education' encouraged 'atheism and worldliness' and was the reason for defeat.

The 1947-77 gap in textbooks makes it difficult to develop an adequate background for the *Nizam-i-Mustafa* Movement, which culminated in General Zia ul Haq's government's accession to power. Restrictions, whether self-imposed or otherwise, do not allow explicit mention of the names of key national figures. This constraint occasionally leads to awkward situations. For example, all textbooks give 'rigging of elections' as a motivation for the *Nizam-i-Mustafa* Movement, but none can explicitly state that these were rigged by Bhutto. Curiously, we were unable to discover any mention of the PNA (Pakistan National Alliance), which spearheaded the movement against Bhutto.

Subtle propaganda is not a sin of which our textbook writers are guilty.

Islamisation in Textbooks

Islamisation is the central concern of all modern Pakistan studies textbooks. After Partition, only three subsequent events are discussed in detail. First, they treat the Objectives Resolution of 1949, which gave the sovereignty over the state of Pakistan to Allah and which separated Muslims from non-Muslims as having different rights of citizenship. Secondly, they harp on the presentation to the government of a twenty-two point programme framed by thirty-one prominent *ulama* in 1951. This programme later became part of the Manifesto of the *Jamaat-i-Islami*,

acknowledged on the front cover of this document. The third event, which forms the bulk of post-Partition history, is the implementation of Islamic principles by General Zia ul Haq.

Modern textbooks heavily stress the formal and ritualistic aspects of Islam, as against those which emphasise social justice. Science and secular knowledge are held in deep suspicion. Modern education, according to one book, should be shunned because it leads to atheism and worldliness. Another book describes an utopian society, one which supposedly existed at the time of Hazrat Nizam-ud-Din, as one in which ritual was meticulously adhered to:

Young and old, small and great, everyone had become regular at prayers. Apart from the five prayers, people enthusiastically said supplementary prayers of *ishraq*, *chasht*, *zawal*, and *awabin*. People used to ask each other of the verses to be read, or how many times to recite *drud-sharif* after prayers— they kept supplementary fasts even after the month of Ramazan. [28]

The emphasis on ritualistic Islam in modern textbooks is accompanied by a conscious promotion of sentiment against certain non-Muslim communities, particularly Hindus and Qadianis. This is not something new, one may legitimately argue, nor is the exacerbation of communal antagonism limited to Pakistan alone. India, which claims to be secular rather than Hindu, is nevertheless regularly ravaged by communal riots with the majority of victims being Muslims. Hindu chauvinism is a powerful factor in Indian politics and expresses itself through a variety of newspapers and magazines, even though propaganda through school texts is officially forbidden. However, in Pakistan, because of the adoption of an exclusivist national ideology, there are no constraints on the free expression of communal hatred. Thus, the Hindu is portrayed as monolithically cunning and treacherous, obsessively seeking to settle old scores with his erstwhile masters. This Hindu is responsible for the break-up of Pakistan:

The same Bengali Hindu was responsible for the backwardness of East Pakistan. But, hiding the story of his two-century old sins, atrocities, and pillage, he used 'Bengali nationalism' to punish innocent West Pakistanis for sins they had not committed. [29]

Justice Shameem Hussain Kadri, ex-chief justice of the Lahore High Court, writes of the 'diabolical Hindus' and 'Hindu

conspiracies' in his officially circulated book.[30] There are countless similar examples.

In part, the existence of anti-Hindu sentiment is a consequence of the wholesale communal massacres during Partition, which left around half a million dead on each side. Even under the best conditions the scars would need many decades to heal. But the explanation for the revival of communalist sentiment is not to be found wholly in the tragedies of 1947. An examination of history texts written soon after Partition - a time when the grief of shattered families was at its peak - shows them to be incomparably more liberal. The history of the subcontinent was taken to start with the ancient Indus valley civilisations rather than with the conquest of India by the first Muslim invader, Mohammad bin Qasim, in 712. In contrast to present-day books, these books contained discussions of the empires of Ashoka and the Mauryas. The movement for Pakistan was presented as a defence against Hindu domination, not as a movement for religious revival.

The deliberate revival of communal antagonism over 30 years after Partition suggests that political expediency, rather than religious factors, has asserted a dominant influence in this matter. The permanent militarisation of society requires a permanent enemy. For many reasons, Pakistan's other neighbours are unsuitable for this purpose. On the other hand, rulers in both India and Pakistan have long found mutual hostility and tension indispensable political tools.

Conclusion

The change in character of Pakistani education, and the rewriting of Pakistan's history, coincide with the change in nature of the ruling elites and altered needs. The Westernised liberal elite, which had inherited political power from the British, had given to education a basically secular and modern character which might have eventually created a modern, secular-minded citizenry. But the self-seeking and opportunistic nature of this elite forced it progressively to abandon liberal values in the face of exigencies, political and economic. Discriminatory laws against non-Muslim minorities were passed, the feudal structure of rural society was left intact, and quality education was limited to a tiny minority. The ambient corruption in society gradually diffused into institutions which could have transformed and modernized Pakistani society. By the time of the 1977 army coup, liberalism was already moribund.

The recasting of Pakistani history is an attempt to fundamentally redefine Pakistan and Pakistani society and to endow the nation with a historic destiny. Islam is the integrative ideology, its enforcement a divine duty. Viewed from this angle, it becomes essential to project the movement for Pakistan as the movement for an Islamic state, the creation of which became a historic inevitability with the first Muslim invasion of the subcontinent. The revised history of Pakistan uses much the same idiom, and the same concepts of Islamic state and of politics in Islam, as the *Jamaat-i-Islami*. Its wholesale dissemination through educational institutions demonstrates both the influence of the *Jamaat* on education as well as the confluence of interests and philosophy of military rulers and the *Jamaat*.

Notes:

- [1.] University Grants Commission directive, quoted in Azhar Hamid, et al. *Mutalliyah-i-Pakistan* (Islamabad: Allama Iqbal Open University, 1983), p. xi.
- [2.] Ibid., pp. xii-xiii.
- [3.] Government of Pakistan, Federal Ministry of Education, *Pakistan Studies (Compulsory) For Intermediate Classes* by Safdar Mahmood, et al. (Islamabad: Government of Pakistan). Approved for the Departments of Education of the Punjab, Sind, NWFP, Baluchistan, Federal Areas, and liberated Kashmir vide notification number F.11-16/81-HST, dated 2 November 1981, as the sole textbook for intermediate classes.
- [4.] S. Husain and M. A. Hasan, *Mukhzun Mutalliyah-i-Pakistan* (Lahore: Kitab Khana Danishwuran, 1981), p. 1.
- [5.] *Nawa-i-Waqt* (Karachi), 14 August 1984.
- [6.] S. Husain and M. A. Hasan, *Mukhzun Mutalliyah*, p. 2.
- [7.] M. D. Zafar, *Pakistan Studies for Medical Students* (Lahore: Aziz Publishers, 1982), p. 20.
- [8.] Mohammad Munir, *From Jinnah to Zia* (Lahore: Vanguard Books Ltd., 1980), p. 26.
- [9.] Abul Ala Maudoodi, *Islamic Law and Constitution*, ed. Khurshid Ahmed (Karachi: *Jamaat-i-Islami* Publications, 1955).
- [10.] Jamiluddin Ahmed, *Recent Writings and Speeches of Mr. Jinnah* (Lahore: Sheikh Mohammad Ashraf, 1947), p. 176.
- [11.] Azhar Hamid, et al., *Mutalliyah-i-Pakistan*, p. 27.
- [12.] Raja of Mahmudabad, 'Some Memories', in *Partition of India - Policies and Perspectives 1937-1947*, eds. C. H. Philips and M. D. Wainwright (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1970), pp. 388-9.
- [13.] Ibid., p. 389.
- [14.] C. H. Philips and M. D. Wainwright, *Partition of India*, p. 32.
- [15.] Azhar Hamid, et al., *Mutalliyah-i-Pakistan*, p. 221.
- [16.] Khalid bin Sayeed, 'Personality of Jinnah and his Political

- Strategy', in C.H. Philips and M. D. Wainwright, *Partition of India*, pp. 276-93.
- [17.] M. Munir, *From Jinnah to Zia*, p. 30.
- [18.] Ibid., p. 29.
- [19.] Jamiluddin Ahmed, *Recent Writings and Speeches*, p. 248.
- [20.] K. K. Aziz, *The Making of Pakistan* (Islamabad: National Book Foundation, 1976).
- [21.] Quoted in Sarwat Sawlat, *Pakistan Ke Baray Log* (Lahore, 1982), pp.295-6.
- [22.] Abul Ala Maudoodi, *Mussalman Aur Maujooda Syasi Kashmakash*, quoted in K. K. Aziz, *The Making of Pakistan*, p. 148.
- [23.] Maulana Kausar Niazi, *Maudoodiat Awam Ki Adalat Men* (Lahore: n.d.).
- [24.] Zia-ul-Haq, quoted in M. D. Zafar, *Pakistan Studies*, p.147.
- [25.] S.M. Rafeeq, *Tehrik-i-Pakistan* (Lahore: Standard Book House, 1983), p. 271.
- [26.] Azhar Hamid, et al., *Mutalliyah-i-Pakistan*, p. 233.
- [27.] Ibid., p. 235.
- [28.] Ibid., p. 41.
- [29.] Ibid., p. 32.
- [30.] Justice Shameem Hussain Kadri, *The Creation of Pakistan* (Lahore: Army Book Club, 1983).



BRITISH POLICY OF DIVIDE AND RULE: PARTITION OF INDIA

Ram Puniyani

Jaswant Singh in his recent book on Jinnah has praised the secular nature of Jinnah and has held Nehru-Patel responsible for Partition of India. Many people from Pakistan are praising Jaswant Singh's book to the sky, while here in India there is a mixed reaction. Most strong one came from BJP President Rajnath Singh who hinted that any praise of Jinnah, will be met with strict action. The problem with such formulation, Jinnah was secular, Nehru-Patel were responsible for partition, is that it is an extremely superficial analysis and does not look at the complex multilayered phenomenon of partition tragedy. It totally bypasses the role of British rulers and the different interests of diverse classes during freedom movement. The response to the book is either at emotive level, our leader versus your leader, or how dare you speak against our icon!

In the midst of the whole debate, the British get away with the cake. As such they not only took all the measures, implemented all policies which were divisive but also accepted all the demands which led to partition. In the process they ensured that even after they leave, the interests of imperial powers, UK-USA, in the Middle East remain safe and secure. This ensured that they continue to dominate the area and retain their military and political base in the region. While the mini battle, Jinnah versus Nehru-Patel is on, the role of the major culprits of partition, the Colonial powers of yesteryears and the imperialist power of today is generally not being brought under scrutiny.

If we look at the British policies, right from the beginning there were germs of divide and rule. They saw Indian society as divided along religious lines, underplaying the fact that the real divisions were not along religious lines but along class and caste lines. Shaken by the massive revolt of 1857, their subtle policies of 'divide and rule' started becoming more overt and articulate. In 1858 Lord Elphinstone, Governor of Bombay Province, in his communication to The East India Company's executives wrote, "Divide et Impera" (Divide and Rule) was old Roman motto and it should be ours." In return Charles Wood, Secretary of State for India wrote that, "The antagonism of Indian races was an element

of strength to the British India. Therefore ‘a dissociating spirit’ should be kept up, for if India was to unite against us, how long could we maintain ourselves.”

Both these quotes amply indicate towards shape of policies in times to come. As a foundation of these polices, ‘doctoring of mass consciousness’ along religious lines began through specially sponsored History books. The two major ones’ in this direction were Six Volume ‘History of India as told by her Historians’ by Elliot and Dawson and History of India by James Mill, who periodized the Indian History into Hindu Period, Muslim Period and British period. This periodization gave the impression that history’s period is determined by the religion of the king. Needless to say that the medieval administration of Kings was never based along religious lines; their court officials and chain of Landlords were belonging to both the religions. These British sponsored accounts of History argued that Muslims Rulers had enslaved India and now British have come to end the misrule of Muslim Kings. Such an account became a convenient tool in the hands of Hindu communalists, Hindu Mahasabha and RSS, to play their part of divisive politics amongst masses. The Muslim League turned it around to say that Muslim rulers were glorious and great.

This communalization of minds was the fertile soil on which the communalists could plant their narrow agenda of Muslim Nation and Hindu Nation. Another British Historian Sir T.W. Holderness in his book Peoples and Problems of India mooted the idea that Hindus and Muslims regard themselves as separate nations. This book came out in 1923 and in the same year Savarkar came out with his book, ‘Hindutva or Who is a Hindu’?, where the same formulation was presented in a different way.

At concrete level on the political chessboard, Lord Curzon, the then Viceroy of India, partitioned Bengal (1904) with communal motivation and this was probably the first concrete experiment in communalizing the politics at big level. Curzon went on to declare that this is an attempt to invest in the Mussalmans of Eastern Bengal. Just a couple of years later (2006) the delegation of Muslim Landlords and Nawabs was received by Viceroy, where he declared that these Muslim elite to be the representatives of Muslim community. The delegation went to ask for separate electorate for Muslims, and these separate electorates introduced later acted as the trigger to polarize the nation along religious lines. Many a members of this delegation were also part of United India Patriotic Association, an organization of Hindu and Muslim landlords and Kings which had come up in the wake of formation

of Indian National Congress. Indian National Congress was critical of British and in response, this association pledged to enhance the loyalty of the people to the British crown.

Thus Viceroy Minto subtly encouraged Muslim communalism, and later the same delegation members went on to form Muslim League. Lady Minto in her communication takes pride in what the Lord had done. She commented that what has happened, the receiving of delegation etc. will pull back sixty million people from joining the ranks of seditious opposition, meaning the rising national movement.

MacDonald's Communal Award of 1932 was the next step, which enhanced the communal divides. Interestingly in 1939 Congress firmly told the British that they will not join the war efforts until they are guaranteed freedom in return. And lo and behold in 1940 Jinnah comes with the demand for Pakistan at Lahore Muslim League convention. Can such things be coincidental? Demand of Pakistan may have been a bargaining counter but its timing is interesting.

No doubt the Cabinet mission plan could have prevented partition, but it is debatable whether it would not have sown the fissiparous tendencies amongst the princely states and the states where Muslim League was in majority. The other necessity which made British to partition India, related to their strategic needs in the area. At the end of WWII, the global power equations changed. USA and USSR both emerged as major powers. US had posted its representative in India from 1942. With British deciding to leave India, freedom was imperative. The British calculation at this time was that an Undivided India with leadership of Congress will not let Britain continue with its military bases in the area. With USSR coming up in a big way, Mao Tse Tung rising in China and section of Congress leadership impressed by socialism, UK-USA were sure that India will not side with them in their global designs of countering USSR militarily and in continuing their oil plunder in middle east. Here comes the Radcliff Line, which runs in the areas adjacent to Iraq, Afghanistan and Sinkiang. British diplomats had the job cut out for them, to make Jinnah accept moth eaten Pakistan and to make Congress leadership to accept the partition.

Somehow the plans of imperialists were immaculate. And in times to come Pakistan, where Mr. Jinnah wanted to have religious freedom, was converted into a land ruled by Mullahs, Army and American Ambassador. It was the same Pakistan which was supported to the hilt on the Kashmir issue; the idea was that US

strategic interests are safe with this arrangement. It is a matter of great relief that Pakistan is struggling to come out from the vice like grip of Army, but can it shed its client state type status vis a vis US, is the million dollar question. The people of Pakistan have been big victim of Imperialist designs all through while Pakistan military has been having all the green pastures for itself.

In partitioning India, colonialists reaped rich harvest at the cost of the people of the subcontinent, millions dead, a single entity India, divided into Pakistan, India and Bangla Desh. These countries keep on spending a major part of their budgets in investing in armaments and fattening of their armed forces, something which could have been meaningfully invested for the growth and development of the region. We need to wake up from the blame game and see the real culprit.

Partition & the Fantasy of A Masculine State

Ashis Nandy

29 August 2009

Times of India

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/msid-4945817,prtpage-1.cms>

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Human beings have lived with states for millennia. There were even republican states in ancient times. Nation states are new; they came into their own in 17th-century Europe. Today, all states are not nation states, but most states are. European ideas take strange forms outside Europe. In Asia and Africa, colonialism conflated the ideas of the state and the nation state. Thus, when the western-educated, middle-class leaders of India's freedom movement fought for independence, they did not want only a state, but a European-style, centralised, modern nation state. Such a state, they thought, would be a magical cure for India's backwardness. When the Muslim League demanded a separate homeland for Indian Muslims, its leaders too thought of a standard nation state.

However, a nation state requires a nation and an ideology of nationalism. Simple, old-fashioned, non-ideological patriotism is not enough for it. More so if it is a republican state, led by new, insecure, nervous political leaders worried about its diverse, 'ungovernable' citizens and psychologically not yet closely linked to the state.

That is why V D Savarkar, despite being an avowed atheist and dismissive towards Hinduism as a religion, had moved towards the idea of Hindutva, which redefined the Hindus as a nation and Hindutva as their national ideology. This was years before Muhammad Ali Jinnah spoke of Hindus and Muslims as separate nations. And Savarkar was honest enough to admit it: "I have no quarrel with Mr Jinnah's two-nation theory. We Hindus are a nation by ourselves and it is a historical fact that Hindus and Muslims are two nations."

It is absurd to believe that Jawaharlal Nehru and Vallabhbhai Patel

were immune to the seductive charms of a nation state. Both were modern, knowledgeable, western-educated persons, in awe of Europe's muscular states. Both looked at the future Indian state as a means of pushing the obstinate, ill-educated, fractious Indians towards a better future and 'proper' citizenship. They had their own ways of defining nationality, but they certainly did not look kindly upon a decentralised state, which Gandhi would have approved.

Indeed, Jinnah demanded a looser, federal polity built around powerful provinces as a way out of partitioning the country. The Indian National Congress first accepted the idea and then ditched it. Paradoxically, the power that Jinnah demanded for the provinces was in many ways less than the power the chief ministers of some Indian states have exercised in recent years.

This background explains why, 60 years after the event, partition and the roles in it of individual leaders haunt our political culture. We are still debating in our hearts our birth trauma. We cannot accept that our midwives, too, were children of their times and spoke from within the colonial world in which they lived. We use them as archetypes to battle our fears, anxieties and self-doubts. We are what we are, we suspect, because of their choices, not ours.

We also deny the invisible obstetrician at our birth the colonial regime. Not in the popular sense that it divided and ruled, which all rulers do, but because it framed the theory of state within which the first generation of our rulers from Jinnah to Nehru and Patel thought and moved, for they believed that the theory was universally valid. Gandhi dissented and paid with his life for that. Even now, he has not been forgiven by India's educated, urban, middle class. He arouses hostility not only in the Hindutva brigade, but also in modern, statist admirers of Nehru and Patel, who consider their heroes more progressive, secular, realistic and tough-minded. Savarkar was direct in this respect, too. He despised Gandhi's criticism of modern science, western political thought and the standard idea of the nation state.

The British loved to partition. They partitioned four hapless countries and all have been disasters. Cyprus is too small to be permanently in the news and sheer tiredness probably has blunted the bitterness there. But in Ireland, Palestine and India, partition has remained an open wound. In each case, mutual fear, suspicion and hatred verge on paranoia and, sometimes, necrophilia.

India has avoided the excesses of such a sickness of the soul because of its size; much of it did not see the violence of partition.

However, things are changing. India is getting globalised and the urban, modernising, middle class is expanding. A pan-Indian, media-based political consciousness is crystallising and it includes a packaged theory of history. A large middle class bent on avenging historical wrongs could be a dangerous vector. It may opt for a nationalism that will not see the partitioning of British India as a tragedy because millions Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs suffered from it. Nor will it care that partition devastated myriad communities, cultures and inter-religious bonds. It will remember partition, as some already do, as a humiliation of the Hindus and as a loss of real estate. I look at the future with apprehension and fear that we may have already lost a part of our selfhood.



JASWANT, JINNAH AND GHOST OF INDIA'S PARTITION

Ram Puniyani

Jaswant Singh's latest book on Jinnah (August 2009) has rekindled the debate 'who did it' of partition. The storm created by this work can be gauzed from the fact that BJP, the party of which Jaswant Singh has been the founder member and for which he has been working from last three decades, was expelled him from the party. The basic point Singh is making is that Jinnah was a secular person, he has been wrongfully demonized in India, that Nehru and Patel rather than Jinnah were responsible for partition of India because of which there was gory violence and that Muslims are being treated as aliens in India.

To take the last point first. One concedes that Muslims have and are being treated as aliens in India. One of the major political parties which has targeted Muslims and, whose aggressive anti Muslim campaigns have resulted in their present plight, their exclusion from social and economic space is BJP, itself. The question is what has Mr. Jaswant Singh been doing when BJP has been asserting the concept of Hindu nation, has been part of processes which have relegated Muslims to the status of second class citizens? One is not arguing that the maltreatment of Muslims is only due to BJP. The major factor has been the subtle penetration of RSS ideology in the social and political arena of Indian life. While Jaswant Singh does not come from the RSS shakhas, he has been part of the party, which is the political vehicle of RSS. In this case his cry of 'alienation of Muslims' looks like shedding crocodile tears!

As far as Jinnah being secular is concerned, it is ironical that a party, which Jinnah headed with 'brilliance', had the name Muslim League! If that does not clarify the communal evaluation of a person what else will. Jinnah despite his exposure to the Western culture, despite his being part of the Indian National Congress for initial part of his life, did become the 'sole spokesman' of interests of Muslims, i.e. Muslim elite, in due course of time. One agrees that the individual attributes of the Qaed-e-Azam of Pakistan were remarkable, but that does not make him secular. Secularism essentially stands for relegating religious identity to private realm

to one's life, while Jinnah chose to lead Muslim League, where the religious identity was the base of the national identity.

There were people like Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, Rafi Ahmad Kidwai and others who chose to be part of National movement for composite Indian nation. Majority of poor Muslims continued to support and follow Mahatma Gandhi and national movement. There were even Muslim religious leaders, and seminaries like those of Barelvi and Deoband, which stood for composite Indian Nationalism. On the other hand Muslim League, initially a product of the politics of Muslim Landlords and Nawabs and later joined in by section of educated and affluent Muslims, kept talking of interests of 'Muslims' and kept labeling Congress as Hindu party, despite its secular policy of Indian Nationalism.

The language of Interests of Muslims, leading to the notion of 'Muslims are a separate nation' was quiet akin and parallel to the concept of Hindu nation propagated by Savarkar-RSS, of India being a Hindu Rashtra, Hindu Nation. Do all Muslims have similar interests as asserted by Jinnah? What was the similarity between the interests of Ashraf and Arjal Muslims? What was the similarity of interests between the interests of rich landlord, businessmen Muslims and the poor artisan Muslims? Savarkar and RSS talked of the interests of Hindus, which layers of Hindus were these? Essentially the same layers which as Muslims were the beneficiaries of Muslim Leagues' articulation, i.e. landlords, clergy and a section of middle classes.

Jinnah's enticing 12th August 1947 'secular speech' notwithstanding, the whole Muslim League predominantly consisted of those communal elements, who did want to convert Pakistan into a Muslims Nation, which they did in due course. And it was the same Muslim League under Jinnah's leadership, which called for a separate state for Muslims, Pakistan, in 1940 Lahore resolution. Just because Jinnah was a non-practicing Muslim and a Westernized person does not make him secular. One's association in politics should determine one's characterization.

As far as role in the partition of the country is concerned, most of the debate is generally focused at superficial level, Muslim League, Congress, Nehru-Patel. Most of the debate is in the language of Heroes and villains, the deeper processes which gave rise to the political streams, which believed in religion based nation state, the role of British in creating such a situation is missing in the debate. While in Pakistan a large section will blame the intransigence of 'Hindu Congress' for partition, in India,

Muslim League, Jinnah are blamed for the same. The source of ‘Hate politics’ in India, the RSS ideology, holds Gandhi also as a major culprit. According to the RSS-Hindu Mahasabha thinking expressed in so many ways, most clearly in the speech and action of Nathuram Godse, Gandhi is to blame for partition as he followed the policy of Muslim appeasement leading to their becoming assertive and going on to demand Pakistan. In most of the communal discourse, a large part of which has become part of social common sense in both the countries, the role of British in leading to the divisive path, and class character of communal organizations, which believed in the Religion based nation state, is missing altogether.

After the coming into being of Indian National Congress in 1885, from amongst the rising classes of Industrialist-Businessmen, educated sections and workers, the old declining classes of Landlords and Kings came together (1888) to form United India Patriotic Association. It is in this organization in which the future founders of Muslim League and Hindu Mahasabha were working shoulder to shoulder, e.g. Raja of Kashi and Nawab of Dhaka. British played their cards very well and in pursuance with the imperial policy of divide et empera (divide and rule) recognized Muslim League as the representative of Muslims in 1906. That time it was predominantly formed by Muslim elite, who themselves were contemptuous of low caste Muslims; Arzals and Azlafs. Similarly Hindu Mahasabha, which was founded in 1915 had Hindu elite who were for Hindu Nation and average Hindus and low castes had no place in their scheme of things.

There is a lot of deeper parallelism in the agenda and language of both these communal streams. These were not only predominantly male dominated organizations, they also talked exclusively of identity issues. At that time the process of social transformation of caste and gender was going on but these streams totally kept aloof from those social processes. These communal streams emphasized on Muslim (elite) Hindu (elite) interests. That’s why they kept aloof from the national movement which aimed to bring in people of all religions, regions, castes and gender into a single stream of Indian ness. Jinnah’s focus on Constitutional methods and deep opposition to participation of masses in national movement was quite similar to Hindu Mahasabha and RSS policy of keeping aloof from freedom movement. It is from the Hindu stream, Savarkar, that the concept of Hindu nation and its politics, Hindutva, emerged. This Hindutva was later picked up by RSS. There was not much difference in many a formulation, which came from these two stables. As a matter of fact Savarkar goes on to quote

approvingly, Jinnah's statement that there are two Nations in India, Hindus and Muslims. And then says that since this is predominantly a Hindu nation, Muslim nation has to remain subordinate to the same. The deeper agenda of communal streams was same, the only difference was Muslim League called for parity and Hindu Mahasabha-RSS wanted subordination of Muslim nation.

While Hindu Communalism got fragmented between Hindu Mahasabha, RSS and some part of it entered Congress, Muslim communalism came up as a major force and later on a section of the Muslim educated classes came to support the same.

It is in this background that the logistics of partition has to be seen. For Muslim League and Hindu Mahasabha-RSS it was a control over nation. National movement and Congress targeted for getting freedom, to come out of the shackles of feudal system and to lay the foundation of Industrial society on democratic basis. It is because of this that Nehru refused to accommodate Muslim League demand of take them in UP ministry in 1937, despite the defeat of Muslim League. Nehru's argument was that since Congress wants to go for land reforms etc., how they can have a landlord representative sitting in the cabinet. Also Nehru refused to believe that Muslim League is a representative of all Muslims, the same way he opposed the formulation that Hindu Mahasabha-RSS are representatives of Hindus. Cabinet Mission plan, to which Congress and Muslim League both had assented, suggested a federal structure with all powers to provinces and have only defense, communication, currency and external affairs with the Central Government. During the course Nehru and Patel both realized that such a weak center will not be able to undertake the programs for country, programs for centralized planning for industrialization and related progress.

Superficially Nehru and Patel can be held responsible for what happened, but that's like looking at the tip of iceberg. The deeper seed of divisiveness, the protection to interests of landlord elements was the British policy. It is in pursuance with that the Muslim League and Hindu Mahasabha was never the subject of British wrath, while the leaders of national movement had to make the British jails as their second home.

For Advani and Jaswant Singh the deeper fascination for Jinnah has some logic. Jinnah pursued two-nation theory and succeeded in forming a Muslim nation. They have the wish to have a Hindu nation, so a subtle admiration as to how Jinnah could achieve his

goal and so is a great hero for those pursuing religion based politics. At ideological level they are on the same wave-length, religion based nation state, as was Jinnah. They also visualize that by exonerating Jinnah from the blame of partition they are cornering Nehru and Congress, which at one level serves the BJP agenda. And here lies the problem. Since Nehru and Patel are inalienable as far as the trajectory of practical politics is concerned, Patel also comes in to the ambit of blame game which cannot be tolerated by large section of BJP followers. Another reason is that in RSS shakhas' indoctrination module, the blame of partition is put on Jinnah's head and the on the follies of Gandhi and Nehru. So how can Jinnah be resurrected without annoying the RSS module of indoctrination? Here lies the dilemma of RSS controlled Rajnath Singhs, and so the expulsion of Jaswant Singh for writing all this. Advani could save his skin earlier despite his 'secular Jinnah speech' because of electoral exigencies, as with sickness of Vajpayee, it was difficult to fill the gap by anybody else.

History has strange lessons to teach. Today lot of powerful opinions are being voiced, but most of them are based on one or the other superficial observation e.g. Jinnah's earlier period when he was part of Congress or his 12th August 1947 speech in the Parliament. Similar type of historiography is also used for the communal historiography where kings are glorified or demonized according their religion. The deeper issues related to the workers, peasants and other average people are missing in this discourse. Same is the problem with the presentation of recent history, where the roots of communal streams (Muslim League, Hindu Mahasabha, and RSS) from the feudal lords and feudal values (Birth based hierarchy of caste and gender) is undermined and deliberately overlooked. This attitude also revels in creating heroes and villains; one streams' hero being another streams villain. No wonder Bollywood is so successful in using this formula. And as major section of Bollywood is not bothered about the deeper issues of broad layers of society so are many of the worthy commentators for whom this wavelength is something easily understood and deliberated upon!



JINNAH: ‘SECULAR’ LEADER OF A COMMUNAL PARTY

L.S. Herdenia

One fails to understand why first Lal Krishna Advani and now Jaswant Singh seem to be so keen to prove the secular credentials of Mohammed Ali Jinnah.

There is no doubt that Jinnah was Secular in thought and action in the initial phase of his political life. He genuinely believed that India’s future lay in Hindu-Muslim unity. Impressed by his Secular ideology, Ms. Sarojini Naidu—one of the prominent freedom fighters—described Jinnah as a “Great harbinger of Hindu-Muslim amity”. Jinnah was one of the prominent leaders of the Congress. There was a time when he was a great admirer of Mahatma Gandhi. He was named the head of the reception committee constituted to accord a grand welcome to the Mahatma when the latter returned from South Africa. But gradually, Jinnah drifted away from Secularism.

It was because of this drift that he accepted the offer of leading the Muslim League. The day he accepted the leadership of the Muslim League, Jinnah lost his Secular character. After all, how can the leader of a party which is open only to believers in a particular faith be called Secular? Can a person lead a ‘Muslim League’ or a “Hindu League” and still be Secular?

Keeping away from religion-based politics is one the primary prerequisites for being Secular. In an attempt to justify his change of heart, Jinnah began branding Congress as a “Hindu party” and Gandhiji as a “leader of the Hindus”.

The BJP and the RSS cry from rooftops that the present day Muslim League is a “Communal outfit”. I want to know from Jaswant Singh that if the present day Muslim League is communal how could the Muslim League of undivided India have been Secular? And how can the supreme leader of a communal party be Secular? If Jinnah was Secular then Hindu Mahasabha and its leaders like Savarkar and Dr. Munje were also secular!

Jinnah had branded the entire Hindu community as communal. On many occasions post-1938, he had repeated ad nauseum that in Independent India, Hindus will have an aggressively hostile attitude towards the minorities. And that since India would be a Hindu-majority state; the minorities were bound to face discrimination and persecution. Is Jinnah's description of the entire Hindu community as communal and aggressive a manifestation of his secularism? Jaswant Singh, perhaps, forgets that after Partition a large number of Muslims chose to remain in India and are still living here. And the credit for this must go to the Secular mindset of the Hindus. Obviously, Jinnah was wide off the mark when he envisaged a dark future for the Muslims in India.

Our Constitution makers decided to make India a Secular state. It would have been impossible to implement this decision if the Indian society—of which Hindus form a majority---was not basically secular in character. Jinnah's grave suspicions vis a vis the secular character of the Hindu community, in itself, was an indication of his communal thought process.

In fact, Jinnah was so hostile towards the Hindus that he even opposed the introduction of Parliamentary democracy in India. He said, "India does not possess even a single qualification necessary for becoming a Parliamentary democracy. The interests of the minorities would be jeopardised if Parliamentary democracy is introduced in India. The country is unsuited for Parliamentary democracy for yet another reason. Most of the Indians are illiterates and ignorant and for centuries they have lived in an atmosphere steeped in superstition. Their mutual relationships are hostile. Because of these reasons, Parliamentary democracy can never succeed in India".

Ignoring Jinnah's pessimistic warning, India was declared a Parliamentary democracy in 1950. Sixty years down the line, Parliamentary democracy is still alive and kicking in India. Elections are being held more or less on time and Parliamentary institutions have not only survived but are flourishing. Voters have been exercising their franchise with great wisdom and sagacity. The electorate displayed uncanny maturity and a deep sense of purpose while voting for the General Elections in 1977, 2004 and 2009. It can thus, safely be concluded that Jinnah was not only not secular but he was also not a democrat.

As for who was responsible for Partition, Jaswant Singh has put the entire blame on the doors of Nehru and Patel. Did Jaswant pay

even the slightest attention to the fact that but for the Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasabha, the seeds of Partition would not even have been sown. First the Hindu Mahasabha and then the Muslim League talked of dividing the country on religious lines. Was it not the Hindu Mahasabha which claimed that India had two nations—the Hindu nation and the Muslim nation. Can we forget that it was Savarkar---the undisputed leader of the Hindu Mahasabha---who proclaimed that only those whose “Janmabhoomi” (place of birth) and “Punyabhoomi (holy land) were in India had the right to live in the country. The conclusion was obvious: since the holy land of the Muslims is not in India, they did not have the right to live here.

Will it be wrong to assume that such insidious proclamations must have forced the Muslims to think in the terms of acquiring a home of their own? The Muslim League came into being to find that home and Jinnah assumed its leadership.

Jinnah had settled down in London for good. A delegation of prominent Muslim leaders from India went to London and persuaded him to take up the leadership of the League. Jinnah joined the endeavour to find a new home for the Muslims and it was in pursuance of that objective that he gave the call for “Direct Action”. Jinnah’s rather provocative speeches that followed heightened the communal tension in the country and violence broke out at several places.

Jinnah soon found a new home for the Muslims of the Indian sub-continent. It was a patently unusual home---one of its own kind in the world. It was a home the two rooms of which (West and East Pakistan) were separated by thousands of kilometers.

Jinnah was a slave of his ego. He wanted his stature to be greater than that of Mahatma Gandhi. But he lacked the Mahatma’s sterling qualities. Even a drop of blood was enough to perturb the Mahatma but Jinnah did not shed a tear—even of the crocodile variety—over the massive bloodshed that preceded Partition.

In fact, Jinnah was in favour of total exchange of populations i.e. all Muslims migrate to Pakistan and all Hindus to India. Had India conceded his demand, crores of people would have been rendered homeless and rootless. How can a leader who put forth such a ridiculous demand be called secular and great? Only Jaswant Singh can answer this question.

Jinnah blames Nehru and Patel for Partition. In my view, his conclusion is based on a very superficial understanding of the forces that were operatingin those turbulent times. In my opinion,

our British rulers—more than anyone else—were responsible for the vivisection of India.

The specter of the Soviet Union was haunting Britain and other imperialist countries. To make matters worse for them, China was fast inching towards Communism. USA and Britain were ready to do anything to halt the march of the Red flag. They knew pretty well that Nehru, Patel and other Indian leaders would never allow India to be used as a base for mounting covert and not-so-covert operations against China and the Soviet Union. They knew equally well that Pakistan would have no qualms in this and hence their determination to divide India at any cost. Time proved that they were right in their calculations. Pakistan readily acceded to becoming a tool at the hands of the imperialist bloc.

It is also said that Nehru and Patel agreed for Partition because they were not getting any younger and were keen to grab power as soon as possible. I don't think Nehru and Patel were in a hurry to come to power but I do shudder at the thought of Nehru and Patel not being around when India became Independent. These two leaders were builders of modern India. If Patel had not used his formidable negotiating--- and bullying--- skills to persuade the rulers of hundreds of big and small princely states to merge with India, the country would have been a much smaller geographical entity than it is today.

It was Nehru's vision that led India on the path to industrial and economic growth. It was Nehru's egalitarian outlook and scientific temperament that paved the way for a social revolution which made India a modern country and a vibrant democracy. Contrast this with Pakistan where democracy was time and again trampled under the boots of the military, where feudal social and economic set-up reigns supreme and where American aid is a *sine qua non* for the survival of the economy.

Thus, even if Nehru and Patel were in a hurry, there was nothing wrong in it. In fact, by accepting Partition without much delay, they saved the truncated India from mayhem and ruin.

Commenting on Jaswant's book, Ms. Sushma Swaraj said that the author should not have criticised Sardar Patel. Let Ms. Swaraj be reminded that accepting the inevitability of Partition, the Sardar had himself said that if a part of the body turns Cancerous, the best course would be to amputate that part and throw it away.



[Home page](#) > [Special Dossiers / Compilations](#) > [Partition of 1947 - India - Pakistan](#) > Book review: Partition of 1947 and its reproduction - Histories

BOOK REVIEW: PARTITION OF 1947 AND ITS REPRODUCTION - HISTORIES

by [Siddhartha Deb](#), 23 February 2009
[London Review of Books, 1 January 2009](#)

Enemy Citizens

- **The Great Partition: The Making of India and Pakistan by Yasmin Khan** [Buy this book](#)
- **The Long Partition and the Making of Modern South Asia: Refugees, Boundaries, Histories** by Vazira Fazila-Yacoobali Zamindar

'Toba Tek Singh' is one of a number of stories about Partition by Saadat Hasan Manto, a brilliant, alcoholic Urdu writer who himself moved from Bombay to Lahore in 1948. It is set in a Lahore asylum whose inmates are about to be split up according to their religion. When they are taken to the border for the exchange, the story's Sikh protagonist – known as Toba Tek Singh after the town he comes from – refuses to co-operate. He lies down between the new boundary posts 'on a piece of land that had no name', resisting to the end a displacement he had expressed no wish to be part of. The story is about the breakdown of language, and its most memorable line is a piece of nonsense repeated by Toba Tek Singh: 'Upri gur gur di annexe di be-dhiyan di mung o daal of di laalteen.'

Manto's story, which was published in 1955, comes at the very beginning of a long attempt in the subcontinent to understand the meaning of Partition. In Britain, Partition has usually been seen as a footnote to decolonisation, and when it is discussed at all, it is in a matter-of-fact way, focusing on the contentious decisions made by Louis Mountbatten, the last British viceroy, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the leader of the Muslim League, and Jawaharlal Nehru, the leader of the Indian National Congress. In contrast, the South Asian response has taken the form of fiction, memoir and film as well as historiography: something the British wanted to see as final is constantly being reinvestigated. But there has also been a more reductive approach in India and Pakistan, one that emphasises

Partition's inevitability. Since the moment of division was also the coming into being of India and Pakistan as modern nations, Partition is often treated as a subplot in the grand narrative of independence. In this nationalist version, Partition was unfortunate but unavoidable, and served a useful function in so far as it distinguishes India and Pakistan from each other. This insistence on difference was manifest in the recent attacks on Mumbai, both in the rhetoric of the young men who saw themselves as carrying out a sacred mission on enemy territory and in the Indian government's speculation that the assault had its origin in Pakistan.

These two recent histories make clear that the nationalist view is false. Not only were Indian and Pakistani nationalism shaped by Partition, both books argue, but Partition itself wasn't the clean break claimed by national histories. The one thing that was clear in 1946, Yasmin Khan writes in *The Great Partition*, is that 'two parties, the Congress and the League, would be at the forefront of leading and designing the new state, or states.' Everything else was uncertain, and if the British had not been in such a hurry to disengage, decolonisation might not have involved partition at all.

By 1945, it had become clear to all concerned that the British no longer had the stamina to remain in the subcontinent. More than two million Indians had served in the British forces, with 24,000 killed, but subcontinental opinion had been greatly divided as to whether blood should be shed on behalf of the colonial masters. In 1942, the Quit India movement had been launched by the Congress, and thousands of activists and leaders, including Mohandas Gandhi, sent to jail; the British assiduously courted the League as a counterforce. The following year, a famine had struck Bengal, one of many agricultural crises stemming from British faith in the free market, and at least three million people had died. By the time Japanese forces invaded north-eastern India in 1944, there were Indian soldiers fighting on both sides.

The Labour government that came to power in 1945 had no desire to continue administering this restive population, and in 1946 negotiations began with leaders from the League and the Congress. The League's leaders, especially Jinnah, worried about what sort of future a Muslim minority would have in an independent India. Their fears were ably exploited by the British and fanned by the attitude of the Congress, which had begun to move away from Gandhian ideas of inclusiveness (although these had been at best imperfectly held) towards a more explicitly Hindu identity. The League did well in the elections of 1945-46 by channelling Muslim uneasiness into a demand for a homeland called 'Pakistan', but

Khan points out that at this stage it was not a clearly articulated territory.

Jinnah himself seems to have prevaricated in his understanding of Pakistan as a separate, sovereign nation-state distinct from India. It seems more likely, in the early days of the constitutional negotiations, at least, that he was rallying his supporters in order to extract the best possible deal from the British for the League, and would have settled for a federal solution if it guaranteed a firm element of decentralised power in the hands of Muslims.

The jostling for power between the Congress and the League was made far worse when the British decided to cut their losses. 'By mid-1946,' Khan says, 'the British government was reluctant to invest a penny more in India's administrative infrastructure. Intelligence units were run down and reports reaching district officers, magistrates, policemen and Criminal Investigation Departments suffered in quality.' She adds that as the colonial apparatus began to withdraw, armed militias proliferated, especially in North India, where the worst of the violence would take place in 1947.

All this will sound familiar: the British playing off one group against another for decades before suddenly abandoning them once it seems no longer feasible to hold onto the territory. The British adopted the same method in Cyprus (as Perry Anderson recently made clear in these pages]) **and in Palestine, and present-day imperialists often propose a similar solution for Iraq. In India, the British had had a long time to perfect its system of divide and rule. After the uprising of 1857, in which Hindu and Muslim soldiers fought together to restore the Mughal emperor, the British went to great lengths to create an intricate taxonomy of caste, class and religion, a patchwork of conflicting interests which apparently could be held together only by the higher logic of imperialism. The British insisted almost hysterically on the hostility between Hindus and Muslims, and by the time decolonisation came, this had been internalised by the most influential members of both communities.**

It is therefore not surprising that when the British came up with a fairly reasonable settlement plan in 1946, proposing a federal system in which both provinces and Muslims would be given a degree of autonomy, no one was willing to consider it. Both the Congress and the League rejected the plan, with the Congress especially unwilling to accept a federal system. There

was an immediate ratcheting up of violence, with killings in Bengal, Bihar, North India and Punjab. It was against this backdrop that partition began to be considered: because it involved a territorial separation, most leaders hoped it would put an end to the killings.

Neither of the conflicting parties had previously given the idea much thought. But Mountbatten emphasised the urgency of the matter, and both Nehru and Vallabhbhai Patel, a hardline Congress leader and future deputy prime minister, were in a hurry to start ruling an independent India. After a series of discussions between Mountbatten, the cabinet in London, and the leaders of the Congress and the League, it was decided on 2 June 1947 that the provinces of Punjab and Bengal would be partitioned. The result, in the words of a contemporary, was an India in the shape of an elephant with its two ears forming Pakistan. Most details were yet to be worked out, from where the boundaries would be drawn to the fate of those who might find themselves part of a minority in their new nations. Despite this, Mountbatten pushed for a hand-over date to be settled, and decided that instead of taking place in 1948, as originally proposed, the transfer of power would happen on 15 August 1947, barely two and a half months after the decision to partition had been taken.

Most people were bewildered when they first heard about the plan, and didn't know what to do when the escalating violence began to force them out of their homes. The boundary commissions finished preparing their maps by 12 August, but they were not made public until 17 August, two days after independence and the day on which the first regiment of British troops set sail for home. By this time, ethnic cleansing had already started: women especially were targeted. As people began fleeing, more anxious to find safety among their own community than to become citizens of as yet abstract nations, trains full of refugees criss-crossed the country. Stopped along the way by marauding bands, the trains were often filled with corpses when they arrived at their destinations, with only the driver and his crew left alive by the mob. Many fled on foot, in columns of people up to 45 miles long, according to Khan. When they reached the other side of the border, some received help from government and social agencies, but most were forced to fend for themselves. Once again, women and children were especially vulnerable: pimps and criminals were lying in wait for them. Many who left their homes did so with the expectation that they would return once

the turmoil subsided. But by the end of 1947, there were three million refugees living in camps in the two countries. By 1948, Punjab had been more or less ethnically cleansed, but the process still continued in Bengal, where 12,000 refugees were arriving every day from East Pakistan. Rehabilitation schemes favoured the middle classes and the literate, and the arrival of refugees, especially in Delhi and Karachi, set off other displacements, as they occupied the houses of members of minority religions in revenge for their own expulsion.

Both Khan and Vazira Zamindar attempt to untangle the causes and effects of the exceptional violence, and do so rigorously and even-handedly, but there is no escaping the melancholy tone that pervades their books. Khan writes of the way that earlier accounts of Partition 'have had a tendency to segregate two sub-genres artificially: the histories of Partition victims . . . and the histories of bureaucratic and political intrigue acted out in the marble-floored rooms of Lutyens's New Delhi'. The task she sets herself is to bring together the experiences of the masses and of the decision-making elite, and what this reveals forcefully is that the people who suffered most were not those who had taken the decisions. Khan shows that hostility between Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims was to a great extent the result of modernisation, and that religious identities were particularly pronounced among the 'educated, middle-class urban milieux of the burgeoning cities'. These people, not the peasantry, were the most vocal proponents of Pakistan or of a unified, Hindu-dominated India, and it was their ideas that would flow back to the villages.

'Women's bodies were marked and branded, with the slogans of freedom, "Pakistan Zindabad" and "Jai Hind", inscribed on their faces and breasts,' Khan writes, adding that at least a third of the brutalised bodies recovered later were those of girls under the age of 12. 'The rest of the women tended to be under 35 and from villages. They were not then, most tellingly, members of the political classes who had fought for, or who had rejected, Partition.'

More than earlier historians, Khan is interested in the alternative possibilities that existed during that tumultuous time. Until the Partition plan stipulated that Pakistan would consist of parts of Punjab and Bengal, other shapes had been suggested, ranging from the non-territorial to those demarcating islands and corridors with a Muslim majority in India. Nor were alternative forms of territory and sovereignty

suggested only for Pakistan. One idea was that independent city-states should be created in Calcutta, Delhi, Karachi and Lahore, each ruled by an elected governor. Many of the rulers of the princely states imagined separate futures for themselves, and occasionally carried out ethnic cleansing: the Muslim Meos were massacred in the princely states of Alwar and Bharatpur in present-day Rajasthan, for example. In the rural areas of the princely state of Hyderabad, a peasant uprising lasted from 1946 to 1951, beginning as a rebellion against the feudal Nizam of Hyderabad but continuing as an insurrection against the Indian state, which seized the Nizam's lands in 1948. Kashmir's Hindu king, who ruled over a largely Muslim population, tried at first to keep his options open before caving in to pressure from the Congress. Soon after, Indian soldiers were flown into the Valley to face off against Muslim irregulars supported by the Pakistani army, so beginning a cycle of occupation, insurgency and proxy wars that still continues.

In *The Long Partition and the Making of Modern South Asia*, Vazira Zamindar unravels the aftermath of Partition rather than the processes leading up to it. She focuses on the urban middle class, conducting ethnographic interviews and contextualising them with archival research. She shows that even members of the middle classes, if they happened to belong to minorities in the new nations, were subject to bureaucratic ill-treatment. In fact, Zamindar argues, the very nature of India and Pakistan as postcolonial nations should be attributed to the way they 'comprehended, intervened in and shaped' Partition as its effects rippled through the early years of independence. 'The highly surveilled western Indo-Pak border, one of the most difficult for citizens of the region to cross to this day,' she writes, 'was not a consequence of the Kashmir conflict . . . but rather was formed through a series of attempts to resolve the fundamental uncertainty of the political Partition itself.'

Zamindar looks in detail at what happened in the cities of Delhi and Karachi, and what emerges is not the story told in nationalist accounts, which portray Pakistan as a sanctuary for Muslims and India as a secular homeland providing shelter to expelled Sikhs and Hindus. None of those responsible for making the decision had foreseen the mass exodus and savagery that would be sparked off by Partition. Neither had most of those affected. In the province of Sindh, Zamindar writes, local leaders were perplexed and unhappy about the exodus of local Hindus, which they attributed to Muslim

refugees from North India, 'who have brought heat and passion into the placid life of this province'.

Jinnah had said that after the founding of Pakistan, the categories of Hindu and Muslim would matter little, but the movement of refugees created a different kind of citizenship, in which belonging to a state was folded in with an individual's religious allegiance. Zamindar shows that Sindhi Muslims in Karachi eventually had to accept their commonality, in terms of citizenship and faith, with Muslims who had come from North India. A similar process took place in Delhi, where the demands of Hindu and Sikh refugees from Punjab took precedence over the rights of Delhi Muslims. It was a continuation of what had happened before Partition, when news of the violence, carried across the subcontinent in pamphlets and newspapers, began the stitching together of imagined communities based on a common religion – communities that overrode those formed by a common language and culture.

Once citizenship defined by religion began taking hold of the government, too, people found themselves being dispossessed by official fiat rather than armed mobs. Muslims who returned to India from Pakistan, either because they had not intended to move permanently or because they had changed their minds, and even Muslims who had never left, found themselves stripped of jobs and property and declared to be 'enemy' citizens. Alongside the categories of citizen and refugee, both governments constructed another category, the evacuee, which allowed them to seize properties which belonged to members of minorities.

Zamindar's analysis of the way this was done is remarkable for what it has to say about India and Pakistan, but valuable too because it brings Partition back into the mainstream of 20th-century history. She notes, for instance, that the institution of a Custodian of Evacuee Property in India and Pakistan not only looked back to the British Custodian of Enemy Property created during World War Two, but came at almost the same time as the Absentee Property Act passed in Israel in 1949. There were many other indications, from the introduction in 1948 of a mandatory permit system for people wishing to cross the new borders, to its supersession in 1952 by an even more repressive passport and visa system, that India and Pakistan were becoming modern states in their response to the anxieties of Partition. That this was not merely a side-effect

is clear from the extracts Zamindar gives from government files, which show an obsession with fifth columns, borders, passports, dispossession and surveillance. It turns out that the lunatic Toba Tek Singh was right all along.

P.S.

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